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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY CUMMINGS, HILLIARD & CO.
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ODE

COMPOSED IN JANUARY, 1816.

———Carmina possumus
Donare, et pretium dicere muneri.
Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis
Post mortem ducibus,
——————clariùs indicant
Laudes, quàm ————Pierides; neque,
Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,
Mercedem tuleris. —— Hor. Car. 8. Lib. 4.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

It is not to bespeak favour or indulgence, but to guard against misapprehension, that the author presumes to state that the present publication owes its existence to a patriotism, anxious to exert itself in commemorating that course of action, by which Great Britain has, for some time past, distinguished herself above all other countries.

Wholly unworthy of touching upon so momentous a subject would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours, could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure the splendour of this great moral triumph. If the author has given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect him from a charge of insensibility, should he state his own belief that these sufferings will be transitory. On the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation, rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe: and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, *they* confide, who encourage a firm hope that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings; and to feed a morbid satisfaction, by aggravating these burthens in

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imagination, in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price: and acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that the author hath given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of his countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which has rendered it much less formidable than the armies of other powers, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, has performed services for humanity too important and too obvious to allow any one to recommend, that the language of gratitude and admiration be suppressed, or restrained (whatever be the temper of the public mind) through a scrupulous dread, lest the tribute due to the past, should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton, adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise. — But this

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particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power, to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was, or can be, independent, free, or secure, much less great in any sane application of the word, without martial propensities, and an assiduous cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked, that the benefits derivable from these sources, are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and to refine them by culture. But some have more than insinuated, that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. The author, trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, hopes that the martial qualities, which he venerates, will be fostered by adhering

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to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned; and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise; particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition, of which the master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination; — by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend that country, under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded, and its riches acquired; by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that no members of it being trampled upon, courage may every where continue to rest immoveably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect; — by adequate rewards, and permanent honours, conferred upon the deserving; by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country; and by especial care to provide and support sufficient Institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

The author has only to add that he should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts * to celebrate the virtues of his country, if he did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within his province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which

* The Ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through these volumes.

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its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

W. WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount,
March 18, 1816.

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"The Odes are much superior to the Sonnets. Wordsworth could not command the tone of sustained reflection, & whence his wisdom from the inspiration his own is uncertain"

A. C. Bradley.

ODE.

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

January 18. 1816.

I.

Hail, universal Source of pure delight!
Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude
On hearts howe'er insensible or rude;
Whether thy orient visitations smite
The haughty towers where monarchs dwell;
Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright
Cheer'st the low threshold of the Peasant's cell!
— Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky
In naked splendour, clear from mist or haze,
Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,
Which even in deepest winter testify
Thy power and majesty,
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.
— Well does thine aspect usher in this Day;
As aptly suits therewith that timid pace,
Framed in subjection to the chains
That bind thee to the path which God ordains
That thou shalt trace,
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass away!
Nor less the stillness of these frosty plains,
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace
Of yon etherial summits white with snow,

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(Whose tranquil pomp, and spotless purity,
Report of storms gone by
To us who tread below)
Do with the service of this Day accord.
Divinest object, which the uplifted eye
Of mortal man is suffered to behold;
Thou, who upon yon snow-clad Heights hast poured
Meek splendour, nor forget'st the humble Vale,
Thou who dost warm Earth's universal mould,—
And for thy bounty wert not unadored
By pious men of old;
Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee hail!
Bright be thy course to-day, let not this promise fail!

II.

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,—
By feelings urged, that do not vainly seek
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
That stream in blithe succession from the throats
Of birds in leafy bower,
Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.
— There is a radiant but a short-lived flame,
That burns for Poets in the dawning East;—
And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,
When the captivity of sleep had ceased;
But he who fixed immoveably the frame
Of the round world, and built, by laws as strong,
A solid refuge for distress,
The towers of righteousness;

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He knows that from a holier altar came
The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice;
Knows that the source is nobler whence doth rise
The current of this matin song;
That deeper far it lies
Than aught dependant on the fickle skies.

III.

Have we not conquered? — By the vengeful sword?
Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity;
That curbed the baser passions, and left free
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord,
Clear-sighted Honour — and his staid Compeers,
Along a tract of most unnatural years,
In execution of heroic deeds;
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal beads
Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,
Shall live enrolled above the starry spheres.
— Who to the murmurs of an earthly string
Of Britain's acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of One whose spirit no reverse could quell;
Of One that 'mid the failing never failed:
Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed,
Shall represent her labouring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity;
Shall shew her clothed with strength and skill,
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary fight;
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;

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Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night
To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream —
Woe, woe to all that face her in the field !
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

IV.

And thus is missed the sole true glory
That can belong to human story !
At which *they* only shall arrive
Who through the abyss of weakness dive.
The very humblest are too proud of heart :
And one brief day is rightly set apart
To Him who lifteth up and layeth low ;
For that Almighty God to whom we owe,
Say not that we have vanquished — but that we survive.

V.

How dreadful the dominion of the impure !
Why should the song be tardy to proclaim
That less than power unbounded could not tame
That Soul of Evil — which, from Hell let loose,
Had filled the astonished world with such abuse,
As boundless patience only could endure ?
1914 — Wide-wasted regions — cities wrapped in flame —
Who sees and feels, may lift a streaming eye
To Heaven, — who never saw may heave a sigh ;
But the foundation of our nature shakes,
And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,
When desolated countries, towns on fire,
Are but the avowed attire
Of warfare waged with desperate mind

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Against the life of virtue in mankind;
Assaulting without ruth
The citadels of truth;
While the old forest of civility
Is doomed to perish, to the last fair tree!

VI.

A crouching purpose — a distracted will —
Opposed to hopes that battened upon scorn,
And to desires whose ever-waxing horn
Not all the light of earthly power could fill;
Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient skill,
And the celerities of lawless force;
Which, spurning God, had flung away remorse —
What could they gain but shadows of redress?
— So bad proceeded propagating worse;
And discipline was passion's dire excess.*
Widens the fatal web — its lines extend,
And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend —
When will your trials teach you to be wise?
— O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies!

VII.

No more — the guilt is banished,
And, with the Guilt, the Shame is fled;
And, with the Guilt and Shame, the Woe hath vanished,
Shaking the dust and ashes from her head!
— No more — these lingerings of distress
Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.

* "A discipline the rule whereof is passion." — LORD BROOK.

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What robe can Gratitude employ
So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?
What steps so suitable as those that move
In prompt obedience to spontaneous measures
Of glory — and felicity — and love,
Surrendering the whole heart to sacred pleasures?

VIII.

Land of our fathers! precious unto me
Since the first joys of thinking infancy;
When of thy gallant chivalry I read,
And hugged the volume on my sleepless bed!
O England! — dearer far than life is dear,
If I forget thy prowess, never more
Be thy ungrateful Son allowed to hear
Thy green leaves rustle, or thy torrents roar!
But how can *He* be faithless to the past,
Whose soul, intolerant of base decline,
Saw in thy virtue a celestial sign,
That bade him hope, and to his hope cleave fast!
The Nations strove with puissance; — at length
Wide Europe heaved, impatient to be cast,
With *all* her living strength,
With *all* her armed Powers,
Upon the offensive shores.
The trumpet blew a universal blast!
But Thou art foremost in the field; — there stand:
Receive the triumph destined to thy Hand!
All states have glorified themselves; — their claims
Are weighed by Providence in balance even;
And now, in preference to the mightiest names,

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To Thee the exterminating sword is given.
Dread mark of approbation, justly gained!
Exalted office, worthily sustained!

IX.

Imagination, ne'er before content,
But aye ascending, restless in her pride,
From all that man's performance could present,
Stoops to that closing deed magnificent,
And with the embrace is satisfied.
— Fly, ministers of Fame,
Whate'er your means, whatever help ye claim,
Bear through the world these tidings of delight!
— Hours, Days, and Months, have borne them in the sight
Of mortals, travelling faster than the shower,
That land-ward stretches from the sea,
The morning's splendours to devour;
But *this* appearance scattered extacy,
And heart-sick Europe blessed the healing power.
— The shock is given — the Adversaries bleed —
Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!
Such glad assurance suddenly went forth —
It pierced the caverns of the sluggish North —
It found no barrier on the ridge
Of Andes — frozen gulphs became its bridge —
The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight —
Upon the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed —
The Arabian desart shapes a willing road,
Across her burning breast,
For this refreshing incense from the West!

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— Where snakes and lions breed,
Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,
Wherever fruits are gathered, and where'er
The upturned soil receives the hopeful seed —
While the Sun rules, and cross the shades of night —
The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!
The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,
And in its sparkling progress read
How virtue triumphs, from her bondage freed!
Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,
And slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats are done;
Even the proud Realm, from whose distracted borders
This messenger of good was launched in air,
France, conquered France, amid her wild disorders,
Feels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,
That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,
And utter England's name with sadly-plausive voice.

X.

Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts
The memory of thy favour,
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savour!
Lodge it within us! — as the power of light
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!
What offering, what transcendant monument
Shall our sincerity to Thee present?
— Not work of hands; but trophies that may reach

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To highest Heaven — the labour of the soul ;
That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,
Upon the inward victories of each,
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
— Yet might it well become that City now,
Into whose breast the tides of grandeur flow,
To whom all persecuted men retreat ;
If a new Temple lift her votive brow
Upon the shore of silver Thames — to greet
The peaceful guest advancing from afar !
Bright be the distant Fabric, as a star
Fresh risen — and beautiful within ! — there meet
Dependance infinite, proportion just ;
— A pile that grace approves, and time can trust.

XI.

But if the valiant of this land
In reverential modesty demand,
That all observance, due to them, be paid
Where their serene progenitors are laid ;
Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-like sages,
England's illustrious sons of long, long ages ;
Be it not unordained that solemn rites,
Within the circuit of those gothic walls,
Shall be performed at pregnant intervals ;
Commemoration holy that unites
The living generations with the dead ;
By the deep soul-moving sense
Of religious eloquence,—
By visual pomp, and by the tie
Of sweet and threatening harmony ;

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Soft notes, awful as the omen
Of destructive tempests coming,
And escaping from that sadness
Into elevated gladness;
While the white-robed choir attendant,
Under mouldering banners pendant,
Provoke all potent symphonies to raise
Songs of victory and praise,
For them who bravely stood unhurt — or bled
With medicable wounds, or found their graves
Upon the battle field — or under ocean's waves;
Or were conducted home in single state,
And long procession — there to lie,
Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,
Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

XII.

Nor will the God of peace and love
Such martial service disapprove.
He guides the Pestilence — the cloud
Of locusts travels on his breath;
The region that in hope was ploughed
His drought consumes, his mildew taints with death;
He springs the hushed Volcano's mine;
He puts the Earthquake on her still design,
Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,
And, drinking towns and cities, still can drink
Cities and towns — 'tis Thou — the work is Thine!
— The fierce Tornado sleeps within thy courts —
He hears the word — he flies —
And navies perish in their ports;

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For Thou art angry with thine enemies!
For these, and for our errors
And sins, that point their terrors,
We bow our heads before Thee, and we laud
And magnify thy name, Almighty God!
But thy most dreaded instrument,
In working out a pure intent,
Is Man — arrayed for mutual slaughter, —
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter!
Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling mail,
And by thy just permission they prevail;
Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
Of them who in thy laws delight:
Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful fight,
Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts!

XIII.

To Thee — to Thee —
On this appointed Day shall thanks ascend,
That Thou hast brought our warfare to an end,
And that we need no second victory!
Ha! what a ghastly sight for man to see;
And to the heavenly saints in peace who dwell,
For a brief moment, terrible;
But to thy sovereign penetration fair,
Before whom all things are, that were,
All judgments that have been, or e'er shall be;
Links in the chain of thy tranquillity!
Along the bosom of this favoured Nation,
Breathe thou, this day, a vital undulation!

Sea fly-leaf.

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Let all who do this land inherit
Be conscious of Thy moving spirit!
Oh, 'tis a goodly Ordinance,—the sight,
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one of pure
delight;
Bless thou the hour, or ere the hour arrive,
When a whole people shall kneel down in prayer,
And, at one moment, in one spirit, strive
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude
For thy protecting care,
Their solemn joy—praising the Eternal Lord
For tyranny subdued,
And for the sway of equity renewed,
For liberty confirmed, and peace restored!

XIV.

But hark—the summons!—down the placid Lake
Floats the soft cadence of the Church-tower bells;
Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams might wake
The tender insects sleeping in their cells;
Bright shines the Sun—and not a breeze to shake
The drops that point the melting icicles:—
O, enter now his temple gate!
Inviting words—perchance already flung,
(As the crowd press devoutly down the aisle
Of some old minster's venerable pile)
From voices into zealous passion stung,
While the tubed engine feels the inspiring blast,
And has begun—its clouds of sound to cast
Towards the empyreal Heaven,
As if the fretted roof were riven.

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Us, humble ceremonies now await;
But in the bosom, with devout respect,
The banner of our joy we will erect,
And strength of love our souls shall elevate:
For to a few collected in his name,
Their heavenly Father will incline his ear,
Hallowing himself the service which they frame;—
Awake! the majesty of God revere!
Go — and with foreheads meekly bowed
Present your prayers — go — and rejoice aloud —
The Holy One will hear!
And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith sincere,
Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate
Of warnings — from the unprecedented might,
Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed;
And of more arduous duties thence imposed
Upon the future advocates of right;
Of mysteries revealed,
And judgments unrepealed,—
Of earthly revolution,
And final retribution,—
To his omniscience will appear
An offering not unworthy to find place,
On this high DAY of THANKS, before the Throne of Grace!

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THE

RIVER DUDDON.

A SERIES OF

SONNETS.

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THE RIVER DUDDON *rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, serving as a boundary to the two latter counties, for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.*

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TO THE REV. DR. W——.

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION.)

The Minstrels played their Christmas tune
To-night beneath my cottage eaves;
While, smitten by a lofty moon,
The encircling Laurels, thick with leaves,
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:
Keen was the air, but could not freeze
Nor check the music of the strings;
So stout and hardy were the band
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listened? — till was paid
Respect to every inmate's claim;
The greeting given, the music played,
In honour of each household name,
Duly pronounced with lusty call,
And "merry Christmas" wished to all!

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O Brother! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills;
And it is given thee to rejoice:
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,
Hadst heard this never-failing rite;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light,
Which Nature, and these rustic Powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours!

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds,
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear — and sink again to sleep!
Or at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more;

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Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid!

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws;
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
And ye, that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
Short leisure even in busiest days;
Moments, to cast a look behind,
And profit by those kindly rays
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,

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A pleased attention I may win
To agitations less severe,
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

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I.

Not envying shades which haply yet may throw
A grateful coolness round that rocky spring,
Bandusia, once reponsive to the string
Of the Horatian lyre with babbling flow;
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains cling;
Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering
Through icy portals radiant as heaven's bow;
I seek the birth-place of a native Stream. —
All hail ye mountains, hail thou morning light!
Better to breathe upon this aëry height
Than pass in needless sleep from dream to dream;
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright;
For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my theme!

II.

Child of the clouds! remote from every taint
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;
Thine are the honours of the lofty waste;
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,
Thy hand-maid Frost with spangled tissue quaint
Thy cradle decks; — to chaunt thy birth, thou hast
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!
She guards thee, ruthless Power! who would not spare

Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen
Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy lair *
Through paths and alleys roofed with sombre green,
Thousands of years before the silent air
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen!

III.

How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone
My seat while I give way to such intent;
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monument,
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.
But as of all those tripping lambs not one
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent
To thy beginning nought that doth present
Peculiar grounds for hope to build upon.
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's care;
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a gleam
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness rare;
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother, Earth!

* The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

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IV.

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take
This parting glance, no negligent adieu!
A Protean change seems wrought while I pursue
The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth make;
Or rather thou appear'st a glistering snake,
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes, through
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Rill
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white foam;
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath clomb
So high, a rival purpose to fulfil;
Else let the Dastard backward wend, and roam,
Seeking less bold achievement, where he will!

V.

SOLE listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound
Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound,
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
The sun in heaven! — but now to form a shade
For Thee, green alders have together wound
Their foliage; ashes flung their arms around;
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and grey;

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Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes
Carelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
Thy pleased associates: — light as endless May
On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

VI.

FLOWERS.

Ere yet our course was graced with social trees
It lacked not old remains of hawthorn bowers,
Where small birds warbled to their paramours;
And, earlier still, was heard the hum of bees;
I saw them ply their harmless robberies,
And caught the fragrance which the sundry flowers,
Fed by the stream with soft perpetual showers,
Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.
There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;
The trembling eye-bright showed her sapphire blue,
The thyme her purple, like the blush of even;
And, if the breath of some to no caress
Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,
All kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

VII.

"Change me, some God, into that breathing rose!"
The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,

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The envied flower beholding, as it lies
On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose;
Or he would pass into her Bird, that throws
The darts of song from out its wiry cage;
Enraptured, — could he for himself engage
The thousandth part of what the Nymph bestows,
And what the little careless Innocent
Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice!
There are whose calmer mind it would content
To be an unculled flow'ret of the glen,
Fearless of plough and scythe; or darkling wren,
That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender voice.

VIII.

What aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,
First of his tribe, to this dark dell — who first
In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst?
What hopes came with him? what designs were spread
Along his path? His unprotected bed
What dreams encompassed? Was the intruder nursed
In hideous usages, and rites accursed,
That thinned the living and disturbed the dead?
No voice replies; — the earth, the air is mute;
And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield'st no more
Than a soft record that whatever fruit
Of ignorance thou might'st witness heretofore,
Thy function was to heal and to restore,
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute!

'The thought of Natural persons gentlemen amid the hillocks of primeval man." - Rogers

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IX.

THE STEPPING-STONES.

The struggling Rill insensibly is grown
Into a Brook of loud and stately march,
Crossed ever and anon by plank and arch:
And, for like use, lo! what might seem a zone
Chosen for ornament; stone matched with stone
In studied symmetry, with interspace
For the clear waters to pursue their race
Without restraint. — How swiftly have they flown!
Succeeding — still succeeding! Here the Child
Puts, when the high-swollen Flood runs fierce and wild,
His budding courage to the proof; — and here
Declining Manhood learns to note the sly
And sure encroachments of infirmity,
Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near!

X.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance
With prompt emotion, urging them to pass;
A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass;
Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance, —
To stop ashamed — too timid to advance;
She ventures once again — another pause!

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His outstretched hand He tauntingly withdraws —
She sues for help with piteous utterance !
Chidden she chides again ; the thrilling touch
Both feel when he renews the wished-for aid :
Ah ! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,
Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.
The frolic Loves who, from yon high rock, see
The struggle, clap their wings for victory !

XI.

THE FAËRY CHASM.

No fiction was it of the antique age :
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,
Is of the very foot-marks unbereft
Which tiny Elves impressed ; — on that smooth stage
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
In secret revels — haply after theft
Of some sweet babe, flower stolen, and coarse weed
left
For the distracted mother to assuage
Her grief with, as she might ! — But, where, oh ! where
Is traceable a vestige of the notes
That ruled those dances, wild in character ?
— Deep underground ? — Or in the upper air,
On the shrill wind of midnight ? or where floats
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer ?

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XII.

HINTS FOR THE FANCY.

On, loitering Muse — The swift Stream chides us — on!
Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immure
Objects immense, pourtrayed in miniature,
Wild shapes for many a strange comparison!
Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
Abodes of Naïads, calm abysses pure,
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure
When the broad Oak drops, a leafless skeleton,
And the solidities of mortal pride,
Palace and Tower, are crumbled into dust!
— The Bard who walks with Duddon for his guide,
Shall find such toys of Fancy thickly set: —
Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse — we must;
Leave them — and, if thou canst, without regret!

XIII.

OPEN PROSPECT.

Hail to the fields — with dwellings sprinkled o'er,
And one small Hamlet, under a green hill,
Clustered with barn and byer, and spouting mill!
A glance suffices, — should we wish for more,
Gay June would scorn us; but when bleak winds roar

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Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard ash,
Dread swell of sound! loud as the gusts that lash
The matted forests of Ontario's shore
By wasteful steel unsmitten, then would I
Turn into port, — and, reckless of the gale,
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,
Laugh with the generous household heartily,
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

XIV.

O MOUNTAIN Stream! the Shepherd and his Cot
Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude;
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
A field or two of brighter green, or plot
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
Of stationary sunshine: — thou hast viewed
These only, Duddon! with their paths renewed
By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
Thee hath some awful spirit impelled to leave,
Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
Though simple thy companions were and few;
And through this wilderness a passage cleave
Attended but by thy own voice, save when
The Clouds and Fowls of the air thy way pursue!

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XV.

From this deep chasm — where quivering sun-beams play
Upon its loftiest crags — mine eyes behold
A gloomy Niche, capacious, blank, and cold;
A concave free from shrubs and mosses grey;
In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,
Some Statue, placed amid these regions old
For tutelary service, thence had rolled,
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!
Was it by mortals sculptured? — weary slaves
Of slow endeavour! or abruptly cast
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast
Tempestuously let loose from central caves?
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge past?

XVI.

AMERICAN TRADITION.

Such fruitless questions may not long beguile
Or plague the fancy, 'mid the sculptured shows
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;
There would the Indian answer with a smile
Aimed at the White Man's ignorance, the while
Of the Great Waters telling, how they rose,
Covered the plains, and wandered where they chose,
Mounted through every intricate defile,

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Triumphant. — Inundation wide and deep,
O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and steep
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way ;
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase or prey ;
Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or deified ! *

XVII.

RETURN.

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted Yew,
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven croaks ;
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes
Departed ages, shedding where he flew
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that bestrew
The clouds, and thrill the chambers of the rocks,
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,
That slept so calmly while the nightly dew
Moistened each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars :
These couched 'mid that lone Camp on Hardknot's height,
Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars :
These, near that mystic Round of Druid frame,
Tardily sinking by its proper weight
Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth breast it came !

* See Humboldt's Personal Narrative.

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XVIII.

SEATHWAITE CHAPEL.

SACRED Religion, "mother of form and fear,"
Dread Arbitress of mutable respect,
New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;
If one strong wish may be embosomed here,
Mother of LOVE! for this deep vale, protect
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere
That seeks to stifle it; — as in those days
When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,
Whose good works formed an endless retinue:
Such Priest as Chaucer sang in fervent lays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;
And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise!

XIX.

TRIBUTARY STREAM.

MY frame hath often trembled with delight
When hope presented some far-distant good,
That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood
Of yon pure waters, from their aëry height
Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;
Who, 'mid a world of images imprest
On the calm depth of his transparent breast,

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Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!
And seldom hath ear listened to a tune
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
Swoln by that voice — whose murmur musical
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

XX.

THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE.

The old inventive Poets, had they seen,
Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains
Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery plains,
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
Transferred to bowers imperishably green,
Had beautified Elysium! But these chains
Will soon be broken; — a rough course remains,
Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid mien,
Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many a shock
Given and received in mutual jeopardy,
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high!

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XXI.

WHENCE that low voice? — A whisper from the heart,
That told of days long past when here I roved
With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;
Some who had early mandates to depart,
Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart
By Duddon's side; once more do we unite,
Once more beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light;
And smothered joys into new being start.
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory;
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall
On gales that breathe too gently to recal
Aught of the fading year's inclemency!

XXII.

TRADITION.

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant time,
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass
In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;
And, gazing, saw that rose, which from the prime
Derives its name, reflected as the chime
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:
The starry treasure from the blue profound
She longed to ravish; — shall she plunge, or climb

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The humid precipice, and seize the guest
Of April, smiling high in upper air?
Desperate alternative! what fiend could dare
To prompt the thought? — Upon the steep rock's breast
The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

XXIII.

SHEEP-WASHING.

Sad thoughts, avaunt! — the fervour of the year,
Poured on the fleece-encumbered flock, invites
To laving currents, for prelusive rites
Duly performed before the Dales-men shear
Their panting charge. The distant Mountains hear,
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites
Clamour of boys with innocent despites
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange fear.
Meanwhile, if Duddon's spotless breast receive
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive
Such wrong; nor need *we* blame the licensed joys,
Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise:
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

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XXIV.

THE RESTING-PLACE.

Mid-noon is past; — upon the sultry mead
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow throws:
If we advance unstrengthened by repose,
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!
This Nook, with woodbine hung and straggling weed,
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,
Half grot, half arbour, proffers to enclose
Body and mind, from molestation freed,
In narrow compass — narrow as itself:
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,
Be loth that we should breathe awhile exempt
From new incitements friendly to our task,
There wants not stealthy prospect, that may tempt
Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

XXV.

Methinks 'twere no unprecedented feat
Should some benignant Minister of air
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,
The One for whom my heart shall ever beat
With tenderest love; — or, if a safer seat
Atween his downy wings be furnished, there
Would lodge her, and the cherished burden bear
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!

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Rough ways my steps have trod; too rough and long
For her companionship! here dwells soft ease:
With sweets which she partakes not some distaste
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of wrong;
Languish the flowers; the waters seem to waste
Their vocal charm; their sparklings cease to please.

XXVI.

Return, Content! for fondly I pursued,
Even when a child, the Streams — unheard, unseen;
Through tangled woods, impending rocks between;
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood,
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green,
Poured down the hills, a choral multitude!
Nor have I traced their course for scanty gains;
They taught me random cares and truant joys,
That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys;
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

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XXVII.

JOURNEY RENEWED.

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,
Crowded together under rustling trees,
Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;
And for *their* sakes, and love of all that rest,
On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest;
For all the startled scaly tribes that slink
Into his coverts, and each fearless link
Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;
For these, and hopes and recollections worn
Close to the vital seat of human clay;
Glad meetings, — tender partings — that upstay
The drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn
In his pure presence near the trysting thorn;
I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

XXVIII.

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,
Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired domains;
Nor that their turf drank purple from the veins
Of heroes fallen, or struggling to advance,
'Till doubtful combat issued in a trance
Of victory, that struck through heart and reins,
Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,
And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.

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Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie
In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,
The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;
The Torrents chaunt their praise, inspiring scorn
Of power usurped, — with proclamation high
And glad acknowledgment of lawful sway.

XXIX.

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
Of that serene companion — a good name,
Recovers not his loss; but walks with shame,
With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse.
And oft-times he, who, yielding to the force
Of chance-temptations ere his journey end,
From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend,
In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
Not so with such as loosely wear the chain
That binds them, pleasant River! to thy side: —
Through the rough copse wheel Thou with hasty stride,
I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,
Sure, when the separation has been tried,
That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

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XXX.

The Kirk of Ulpha to the Pilgrim's eye
Is welcome as a Star, that doth present
Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent
Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky:
Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high
O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's tent;
Or the Indian tree whose branches, downward bent,
Take root again, a boundless canopy.
How sweet were leisure! could it yield no more
Than 'mid that wave-washed Church-yard to recline,
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine;
Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar
Of distant moon-lit mountains faintly shine,
Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

XXXI.

Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep;
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands
And blooming thickets; nor by rocky bands
Held; — but in radiant progress tow'rd the Deep
Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep
Sink, and forget their nature; — *now* expands
Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
Is opened round him; — hamlets, towers, and towns,

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And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar;
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,
Spreading his bosom under Kentish Downs,
With Commerce freighted, or triumphant War.

XXXII.

Conclusion.

But here no cannon thunders to the gale;
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast
A crimson splendour; lowly is the mast
That rises here, and humbly spread the sail;
While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale
Through which with strange vicissitudes he passed,
The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
Where all his unambitious functions fail.
And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be free,
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,
And each tumultuous working left behind
At seemly distance, to advance like Thee,
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind
And soul, to mingle with Eternity!

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XXXIII.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away. — Vain sympathies!
For, *backward*, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall not cease to glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While *we*, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish; — be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as tow'rd the silent tomb we go,
Thro' love, thro' hope, and faith's transcendant dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.

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POSTSCRIPT.

A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the "Ruins of Rome,"

"The rising Sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft;"

and ends thus,

"The setting Sun displays
His visible great round, between yon towers,
As through two shady cliffs."

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, "Lewesdon Hill," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

"To-morrow for severer thought, but now
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day."

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that these Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the

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above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years; — the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled "The Brook," of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that instead of being a hinderance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it? — There is a sympathy in streams, "one calleth to another;" and, I would gladly believe, that "The Brook" will, ere long, murmur in concert with "The Duddon." But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature, without receiving and

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giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages; — through the "Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius" of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns, (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo "Brook,")

> "The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander
> Adown some trotting burn's meander,
> And na' think lang."

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NOTES.

Sonnet VI.

"There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;
The trembling eye-bright showed her sapphire blue."

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Sympson, author of "The Vision of Alfred," &c. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated. The present severe season, with its amusements, reminds me of some lines which I will transcribe as a favourable specimen. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his "Vision of Alfred," he uses the following illustrative simile:—

"glancing from their plumes
A changeful light the azure vault illumes.
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,

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That wavering to and fro their radiance shed
On Bothnia's gulph with glassy ice o'erspread,
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,
And still the balance of his frame preserves,
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,
Sees at a glance, above him and below,
Two rival heavens with equal splendour glow.
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems.
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland.

Sonnet XVII.

The Eagle requires a large domain for its support; but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steeps of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since one visited Rydal Lake, and remained some hours near its banks; the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed

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by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle. — There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal Lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately. — The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons. — The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stoneside from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets, (which together may be considered as a Poem,) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. "The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the river Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale; wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter, Broughton

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Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone."

" The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of form which the rocky channel of a river can give to water." (Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes, vol. i. pp. 98 — 100.)

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Coniston over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to shew the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the fore-ground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of

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the noisy brook foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few home-steads are interspersed in some places, peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose scite has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byer, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof, like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature every where, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a perfection and consummation of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise it features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milk-maid, to wander from house to house, exchanging "good-morrows" as he passed the open doors; but at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the

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cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage-chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming Brook; *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the Brook descends in a rapid torrent, passing by the church-yard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite Brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the River makes its way into the Plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN; the one opposite is called WALLABARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in several places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished!*"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, "are happily adapted to the many-shaped water-falls," (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high,) "displayed in the short space of half a mile." That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof;

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for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. "The concussion," says Mr. Green, speaking of the event, (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril,) "was heard, not without alarm, by the neighbouring shepherds." But to return to Seathwaite Church-yard: it contains the following inscription.

"In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June, 1802, in the 93d year of his age and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age."

In the Parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel, is this notice:

"Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the Country Parson of Chaucer, &c. An abstract of his character is given in the author's poem, THE EXCURSION; and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

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MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-Crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family-estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth continuing to be of a delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar;* for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these Dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Lowes-water; not being called upon, probably, in that situation, to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a "Gentleman" in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies; the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston, —the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, viz. five pounds per annum: but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage

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attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the help-mate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:

To Mr. ————

"Sir, *Coniston, July* 26. 1754.

"I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house, (of whom I had frequently heard) I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes, plated with iron to preserve them, (what we call clogs in these parts,) with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the re-

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mainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting on each other, the rest in teazing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lug it by sixteen or thirty-two pounds weight, at a time upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, to market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so, at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself." * *

Then follows a letter, from another person dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

" By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care than to any thing else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied, when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man, who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to

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the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

From the Rev. Robert Walker.

"Sir,

"Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C ———, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence then lying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose ages are as follows: Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to

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serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.* 10*s.* of which is paid in cash, viz. 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P. Esq. of P——, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3*l.* from the several inhabitants of L——, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and, I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but, as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and good-will with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of my friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account to the best of my knowledge) I

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hope you will not think your favour to me out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite mis-bestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself, Sir,

"Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

R. W., Curate of S——.

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W. in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which in his own beautiful hand-writing, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself: "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha; indeed I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:

"My Lord,

"I have the favour of yours of the 1st inst., and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's

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hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And, in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands where purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"May it please your Grace,

"Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly: such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering him-

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self candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to

"Your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient
"Son and Servant,
"Robert Walker."

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The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday, were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and, what would to many have been a high price of self-denial, was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole perhaps of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half-a-guinea may be left for "little Robert's pocket-money," who was then at school; entrusting it to the care of a lady who, as he says, "may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly," and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," meaning his wife and himself, "are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only

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mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

"ROBERT WALKER."

He loved old customs and usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a-year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity. — From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than £2000; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details. — And

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to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion-table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's school-mistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro.—Thus, was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Entrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c. with pecuniary gain to himself and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation, he joined

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the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own, less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a hay-cock, or a fleece; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house, were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and de-

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cent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable, that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remained a few years ago neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the the year, was salted and dried, for winter provision: the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. — By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessaries of life;" but afforded them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society.

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It might have been concluded that no one could thus, as it were, have converted his body into a machine of industry for the humblest uses, and kept his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled; his conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away," the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale,—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligations. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been

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afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing that, upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also, while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbour as themselves, and do as they would be done unto, that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Birkett's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures; not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly

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gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious. "There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife, to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact, that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when

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his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that at the time of the augmentatioon of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker; — whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the Church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay, or be distrained upon, for the accustomed annual interest due from them, among others, under the title of Church-stock; a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blameable need not be determined; — certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties. — It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the Part-

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ner of his long life. She was equally strict in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "she was no less excellent than her husband; she was good to the poor, she was good to every thing!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one grand-daughter; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the Chapel, a few steps from the lowly Parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

"O 'tis a burthen, Cromwell, 'tis a burthen
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground, in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the church-yard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not

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spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompass the vale, — masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed, might have been hewn, it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair, is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the Parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society — changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances; had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely-different effects.

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of

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Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memorandums from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

HENRY FOREST, Curate.

Honour, the idol which the most adore,
Receives no homage from my knee;
Content in privacy I value more
Than all uneasy dignity.

Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being 25 years of age."

"This Curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Y^e^ said 9th of May, y^e^ said Mr. Curwen went to the office and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

Hæc testor H. Forest."

In another place he records, that the sycamore trees were planted in the church-yard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the

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gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part.

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu
Diffugiunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;
Utendum est ætate, cito pede præterit ætas."

Sonnet XXXIII.

"We feel that we are greater than we know."

"And feel that I am happier than I know." — Milton.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

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POEMS

OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

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I.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

"Why, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

Where are your books? — that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your mother earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye — it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against, or with our will.

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Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

— Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

II.

THE TABLES TURNED;

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

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Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :
Come, hear the woodland Linnet,
How sweet his music ! on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark ! how blithe the Throstle sings !
He, too, is no mean preacher :
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless —
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :
—We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up these barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

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III.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS

After visiting their Father's Grave.

(August 14. 1803.)

Ye now are panting up life's hill!
'Tis twilight time of good and ill,
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.

For their beloved Poet's sake,
Even honest men delight will take
To flatter you; and Fool and Rake
Your steps pursue:
And of your Father's name will make
A snare for you.

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;
Be independent, generous, brave!
Your Father such example gave,
And such revere!
But be admonished by his Grave, —
And think, and fear!

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IV.

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND,

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

Composed while we were labouring together in his Pleasure-Ground.

SPADE! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his Lands,
And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,
Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;
I press thee, through the yielding soil, with pride.

Rare Master has it been thy lot to know;
Long hast thou served a Man to reason true;
Whose life combines the best of high and low,
The toiling many and the resting few;

Health, quiet, meekness, ardour, hope secure,
And industry of body and of mind;
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure
As Nature is;—too pure to be refined.

Here often hast thou heard the Poet sing
In concord with his River murmuring by;
Or in some silent field, while timid Spring
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when Death has laid
Low in the darksome Cell thine own dear Lord?
That Man will have a trophy, humble Spade!
A trophy nobler than a Conqueror's sword.

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If he be One that feels, with skill to part
False praise from true, or greater from the less,
Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,
Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

With Thee he will not dread a toilsome day,
His powerful Servant, his inspiring Mate!
And, when thou art past service, worn away,
Thee a surviving soul shall consecrate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;
An *Heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou be:—
High will he hang thee up, and will adorn
His rustic chimney with the last of Thee!

V.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

I must apprise the Reader that the Stoves in North Germany generally have the impression of a galloping Horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse!
Let me have the song of the Kettle;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that Horse
That gallops away with such fury and force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

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See that Fly, — a disconsolate creature! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove;
And, sorrow for him! this dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, and now back to the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed;
The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelers methinks I can see him put forth
To the East and the West, and the South and the North;
But he finds neither Guide-post nor Guide.

See his spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh;
His eye-sight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No Brother, no Friend has he near him — while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love;
As blest and as glad in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing!
Thy life I would gladly sustain

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Till summer comes up from the South, and with crowds
Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst sound through the clouds,
And back to the forests again!

VI.

LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the Lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate Part of the Shore, commanding a beautiful Prospect.

Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling: what if here
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb?
What if these barren boughs the bee not loves?
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

——————— Who he was
That piled these stones, and with the mossy sod
First covered o'er, and taught this aged Tree
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember. — He was one who owned
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
A favoured Being, knowing no desire
Which Genius did not hallow, — 'gainst the taint

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Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
And scorn, — against all enemies prepared,
All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,
Owed him no service: wherefore he at once
With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his soul
In solitude. — Stranger! these gloomy boughs
Had charms for him; and here he loved to sit,
His only visitants a straggling sheep,
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:
And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:
And lifting up his head, he then would gaze
On the more distant scene, — how lovely 'tis
Thou seest, — and he would gaze till it became
Far lovlier, and his heart could not sustain
The beauty, still more beauteous! Nor, that time,
When nature had subdued him to herself,
Would he forget those beings, to whose minds,
Warm from the labours of benevolence,
The world, and man himself, appeared a scene
Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh
With mournful joy, to think that others felt
What he must never feel: and so, lost Man!
On visionary views would fancy feed,
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
He died, — this seat his only monument.

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If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms
Of young imagination have kept pure,
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and know, that pride,
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
Is littleness; that he who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used; that thought with him
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
Is ever on himself doth look on one,
The least of Nature's works, one who might move
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love,
True dignity abides with him alone
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
In lowliness of heart.

VII.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every Man in arms should wish to be?
—— It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That make the path before him always bright:

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Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth excercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives;
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable — because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
— 'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He fixes good on good alone, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
— Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand

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On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all;
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need;
— He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'r he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love:
'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,

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Or left unthought of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or He must go to dust without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause:
This is the happy Warrior; this is He
Whom every Man in arms should wish to be.

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VIII.

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

The History of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his Grave is near the head of Loch Keterine, in one of those small pin-fold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the Traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A famous Man is Robin Hood,
The English Ballad-singer's joy!
And Scotland has a Thief as good,
An Outlaw of as daring mood;
She has her brave Rob Roy!
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
And let us chaunt a passing Stave
In honour of that Hero brave!

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart,
And wondrous length and strength of arm:
Nor craved he more to quell his Foes,
Or keep his Friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave;
Forgive me if the phrase be strong; —
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave;
As wise in thought as bold in deed:
For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

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Said generous Rob, " What need of Books ?
Burn all the Statutes and their shelves :
They stir us up against our Kind ;
And worse, against Ourselves.

We have a passion, make a law,
Too false to guide us or control !
And for the law itself we fight
In bitterness of soul.

And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few :
These find I graven on my heart :
That tells me what to do.

The Creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind !
With them no strife can last ; they live
In peace, and peace of mind.

For why ? — because the good old Rule
Sufficeth them, the simple Plan,
That they should take, who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

A lesson which is quickly learned,
A signal this which all can see !
Thus nothing here provokes the Strong
To wanton cruelty.

All freakishness of mind is checked ;
He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;

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While to the measure of his might
Each fashions his desires.

All Kinds, and Creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit :
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
And longest life is but a day ;
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I 'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer's heat and winter's snow :
The Eagle, he was Lord above,
And Rob was Lord below.

So was it — *would*, at least, have been
But through untowardness of fate ;
For Polity was then too strong ;
He came an age too late,

Or shall we say an age too soon?
For, were the bold Man living *now*,
How might he flourish in his pride,
With buds on every bough !

Then rents and Factors, rights of chase,
Sheriffs, and Lairds and their domains,
Would all have seemed but paltry things,
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
To these few meagre Vales confined ;

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But thought how wide the world, the times
How fairly to his mind!

And to his Sword he would have said,
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact
From land to land through half the earth!
Judge thou of law and fact!

'Tis fit that we should do our part;
Becoming, that mankind should learn
That we are not to be surpassed
In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough:—
We'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff.

I, too, will have my Kings that take
From me the sign of life and death:
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
As, *might* have been, then, thought of joy!
France would have had her present Boast;
And we our brave Rob Roy!

Oh! say not so; compare them not;
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!
Would wrong thee no where; least of all
Here standing by thy Grave.

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For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
Wild Chieftain of a Savage Clan!
Hadst this to boast of; thou didst love
The *liberty* of Man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor Man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
Alone upon Loch Veol's Heights,
And by Loch Lomond's Braes!

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same;
And kindle, like a fire new stirred,
At sound of Rob Roy's name.

IX.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

Art thou a Statesman, in the van
Of public business trained and bred?
—First learn to love one living man;
Then mayst thou think upon the dead.

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A Lawyer art thou? — draw not nigh;
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
A rosy Man, right plump to see?
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near:
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou One of gallant pride,
A Soldier, and no man of chaff?
Welcome! — but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a Peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? One, all eyes,
Philosopher! a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece
O turn aside, — and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
That abject thing, thy soul, away!

— A Moralist perchance appears;
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod:
And He has neither eyes nor ears;
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great nor small;
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All in All!

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Shut close the door; press down the latch;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed:
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,
— The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak, both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

— Come hither in thy hour of strength;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
Here stretch thy body at full length;
Or build thy house upon this grave.

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X.

TO MY SISTER.

Written at a small Distance from my House, and sent by my little Boy.

It is the first mild day of March:
Each minute sweeter than before,
The Red-breast sings from the tall Larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My Sister! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you; and pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living Calendar:
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now an universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,

A son of Basil Montagu.

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From earth to man, from man to earth :
— It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than fifty years of reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We 'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
— And bring no book : for this one day
We 'll give to idleness.

XI.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

Who had been reproached for taking long Walks in the Country.

Dear Child of Nature, let them rail !
— There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold,

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Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own delightful days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a Shepherd-boy,
As if thy heritage were joy,
And pleasure were thy trade,
Thou, while thy Babes around thee cling,
Shalt shew us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee when grey-hairs are nigh
A melancholy slave;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

XII.

LINES

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;

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And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreathes;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played;
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from Heaven is sent,
If such be nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

XIII.

SIMON LEE,

THE OLD HUNTSMAN,

With an Incident in which he was concerned.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,

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An Old Man dwells, a little man,
I've heard he once was tall.
Full five-and-twenty years he lived
A running Huntsman merry;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is blooming as a cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And no man was so full of glee!
To say the least, four counties round
Had heard of Simon Lee;
His Master's dead, and no one now
Dwells in the hall of Ivor;
Men, Dogs, and Horses, all are dead,
He is the sole survivor.

His hunting feats have him bereft
Of his right-eye, as you may see,
And Simon to the world is left,
In liveried poverty.
When he was young he little knew
Of husbandry or tillage;
And now is forced to work, though weak,
— The weakest in the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind;
And often, ere the race was done,
He reeled and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices;

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For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices!

But he is lean and he is sick,
His dwindled body half awry
Rests upon ancles swoln and thick;
His legs are thin and dry.
He has no son, he has no child,
His Wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

Old Ruth works out of doors with him,
And does what Simon cannot do;
For she, not over stout of limb,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
Alas! 'tis very little, all
Which they can do between them.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger;
But what avails the land to them,
Which they can till no longer?

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,

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For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ancles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you 've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader! you would find
A tale in every thing.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it:
It is no tale; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you 'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This Old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand;
So vain was his endeavour
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked forever.

" You 're overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool," to him I said;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,

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At which the poor Old Man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
— I 've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning,
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

XIV.

In the School of —— is a Tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several Persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the Foundation of the School, with the Time at which they entered upon and quitted their Office. Opposite one of those Names the Author wrote the following Lines.

If Nature, for a favourite Child
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

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— When through this little wreck of fame,
Cypher and syllable! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up —
He felt with spirit so profound.

— Thou Soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

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XV.

THE

TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
"The will of God be done!"

A Village Schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind

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A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, coming to the church, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard Yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a Child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;

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She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again:
— And did not wish her mine."

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

XVI.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of Friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old Border-song, or Catch,
That suits a summer's noon.

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Or of the Church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The gray-haired man of glee:

"Down to the vale this water steers,
How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, upon this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The Blackbird in the summer trees,
The Lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

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With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there is one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains,

And, Matthew, for thy Children dead
I'll be a son to thee !"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas ! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

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And, ere we came to Leonard's Rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

XVII.

LINES

Written while sailing in a Boat at Evening.

How richly glows the water's breast
Before us, tinged with Evening hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
The Boat her silent course pursues!
And see how dark the backward stream!
A little moment past so smiling!
And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
Some other Loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure;
But, heedless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
Till peace go with him to the tomb.
— And let him nurse his fond deceit,
And what if he must die in sorrow!
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
Though grief and pain may come to-morrow?

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XVIII.

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS.

Composed upon the Thames near Richmond.

Glide gently, thus for ever glide,
O Thames! that other Bards may see
As lovely visions by thy side
As now, fair River! come to me.
O glide, fair Stream! for ever so,
Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
Till all our minds for ever flow,
As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought! — Yet be as now thou art,
That in thy waters may be seen
The image of a poet's heart,
How bright, how solemn, how serene!
Such as did once the Poet bless,
Who, murmuring here a later* ditty,
Could find no refuge from distress
But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
For *him* suspend the dashing oar;
And pray that never child of Song
May know that Poet's sorrows more.

* Collins's Ode on the Death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

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How calm! how still! the only sound,
The dripping of the oar suspended!
— The evening darkness gathers round
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

XIX.

A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION;

OR,

CANUTE AND ALFRED.

THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,
Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,
To aid a covert purpose, cried — "O ye
Approaching waters of the deep, that share
With this green isle my fortunes, come not where
Your master's throne is set!" — Absurd decree!
A mandate uttered to the foaming sea,
Is to its motion less than wanton air.
— Then Canute, rising from the invaded Throne,
Said to his servile Courtiers, "Poor the reach,
The undisguised extent, of mortal sway!
He only is a king; and he alone
Deserves the name (this truth the billows preach)
Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and heaven
obey."
This just reproof the prosperous Dane
Drew, from the influx of the Main,

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For some whose rugged northern mouths would
strain
At oriental flattery ;
And Canute (truth more worthy to be known)
From that time forth did for his brows disown
The ostentatious symbol of a Crown ;
Esteeming earthly royalty
Contemptible and vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,
Rich theme of England's fondest praise,
Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken ;
To cheer the remnant of his host
When he was driven from coast to coast,
Distressed and harassed, but with mind unbroken;
" My faithful Followers, lo ! the tide is spent;
That rose, and steadily advanced to fill
The shores and channels, working Nature's will
Among the mazy streams that backward went,
And in the sluggish pools where ships are pent.
And now, its task performed, the Flood stands still
At the green base of many an inland hill,
In placid beauty and sublime content !
Such the repose that Sage and Hero find ;
Such measured rest the sedulous and good
Of humbler name ; whose souls do, like the flood
Of Ocean, press right on ; or gently wind,
Neither to be diverted nor withstood,
Until they reach the bounds by Heaven assigned."

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XX.

ODE TO LYCORIS,

May, 1817.

I.

An age hath been when Earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed
The front in self-defence.
Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed
While on the wing the Urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade?
— Enough for one soft vernal day,
If I, a Bard of ebbing time,
And nurtured in a fickle clime,
May haunt this horned bay;
Whose amorous water multiplies
The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes;
And smoothes its liquid breast — to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
White as the pair that slid along the plains
Of Heaven, when Venus held the reins!

II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owlet's wing;
Then, Twilight is preferred to dawn,
And Autumn to the Spring.

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Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)
When Nature marks the year's decline
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the soil's requited cares;
Pleased with the blue that ether wears;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
Of the resplendent miracle.

III.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend,
Lycoris! life requires an *art*
To which our souls must bend;
A skill — to balance and supply;
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
Frank greeting, then, to that blithe Guest
Diffusing smiles o'er land and sea
To aid the vernal Deity
Whose home is in the breast!
May pensive Autumn ne'er present
A claim to her disparagement!

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While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay ;
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul !

XXI.

TO THE SAME.

Enough of climbing toil ! — Ambition treads
Here, as in busier scenes, ground steep and rough,
Oft perilous, always tiresome ; and each step,
As we for most uncertain gain ascend
Toward the clouds, dwarfing the world below,
Induces, for its old familiar sights,
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
With wonder mixed — that Man could e'er be tied,
In anxious bondage, to such nice array
And formal fellowship of petty things !
Oh, 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this life,
Making a truth and beauty of her own !
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,
And gurgling rills, assist her in the work
More efficaciously than realms outspread,
As in the map, before the adventurer's gaze,
Ocean and earth contending for regard !
Lo ! there a dim Egerian grotto fringed
With ivy-twine, profusely from its brows
Dependant, — enter without further aim ;
And let me see thee sink into a mood

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Of quiet thought — protracted till thine eve
Be calm as water when the winds are gone,
And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend!
We two have known such happy hours together
That, were power granted to replace them, (fetched
From out the pensive shadows where they lie)
In the first warmth of their original sunshine,
Loth should I be to use it; passing sweet
Are the domains of tender memory!

XXII.

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

On his morning rounds the Master
Goes to learn how all things fare;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Sheep and cattle eyes with care;
And, for silence or for talk,
He hath comrades in his walk;
Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See, a hare before him started!
— Off they fly in earnest chase;
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race,

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And the hare, whom they pursue,
Hath an instinct what to do ;
Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;
But like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the River was, and crusted
Thinly by a one night's frost ;
But the nimble Hare hath trusted
To the ice, and safely crost ;
She hath crost, and without heed
All are following at full speed,
When lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,
Breaks — and the Greyhound, DART, is over head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW —
See them cleaving to the sport !
MUSIC has no heart to follow,
Little MUSIC, she stops short.
She hath neither wish nor heart,
Her's is now another part :
A loving Creature she, and brave !
And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paw she stretches,
Very hands as you would say !
And afflicting moans she fetches,
As he breaks the ice away.
For herself she hath no fears, —
Him alone she sees and hears, —
Makes efforts and complainings ; nor gives o'er
Until her Fellow sank, and re-appeared no more.

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XXIII.

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

Lie here sequestered : — be this little mound
For ever thine, and be it holy ground !
Lie here, without a record of thy worth,
Beneath the covering of the common earth !
It is not from unwillingness to praise,
Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;
More thou deserv'st ; but *this* Man gives to Man,
Brother to Brother, *this* is all we can.
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
Shall find thee through all changes of the year :
This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent Tree
Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

I grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past ;
And willingly have laid thee here at last ;
For thou hadst lived, till every thing that cheers
In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
Extreme old age had wasted thee away ;
And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;
Thy ears were deaf ; and feeble were thy knees, —
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
Both Man and Woman wept when thou wert dead ;

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Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share;
But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
Found scarcely any where in like degree!
For love, that comes to all; the holy sense,
Best gift of God, in thee was most intense;
A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
A tender sympathy, which thee did bind
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:
Yea, for thy Fellow-brutes in thee we saw
The soul of Love, Love's intellectual law: —
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;
Our tears from passion and from reason came,
And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name!

XXIV.

*THE FORCE OF PRAYER;

OR,

THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITION.

"What is good for a bootless bene?"
With these dark words begins my Tale;
And their meaning is, Whence can comfort spring
When Prayer is of no avail?

*See the White Doe of Rylstone, vol. ii. p. 176.

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"What is good for a bootless bene?"
The Falconer to the Lady said;
And she made answer "ENDLESS SORROW!"
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,
And from the look of the Falconer's eye;
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

— Young Romilly through Barden Woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a Greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The Pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

This Striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall, a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee, — for what cared he
That the River was strong, and the rocks were
steep?

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— But the Greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless Corse.

Now there is stillness in the Vale,
And long unspeaking sorrow :
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a Lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death ; —
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a farther-looking hope,
And hers is a Mother's sorrow.

He was a Tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ;
And the Root of this delightful Tree
Was in her Husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, " Let there be
In Bolton, on the Field of Wharf,
A stately Priory ! "

The stately Priory was reared ;
And Wharf, as he moved along,

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To Matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at Even-song.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief!
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn and ask
Of Him to be our Friend!

XXV.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
A cry as of a Dog or Fox;
He halts and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks:
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy;
With something, as the shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry:

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Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow, or on height ;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, 'till June, December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn* below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway or cultivated land ;
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere ;
Thither the Rainbow comes — the Cloud —
And Mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And Sun-beams ; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past,
But that enormous barrier binds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The Shepherd stood : then makes his way
Towards the Dog, o'er rocks and stones,
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;

* Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

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The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.
From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear!
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear:
He instantly recalled the Name,
And who he was and whence he came;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell!
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog had been through three months' space
A Dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that since the day
On which the Traveller thus had died
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his Master's side:
How nourished here through such long time
He knows, who gave that love sublime,
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate.

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XXVI.

REPENTANCE.

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

The fields which with covetous spirit we sold,
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the day,
Would have brought us more good, than a burthen
of gold,
Could we but have been as contented as they.

When the troublesome Temper beset us, said I,
"Let him come, with his purse proudly grasped in
his hand;
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—we'll die
Before he shall go with an inch of the land!"

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their bowers;
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide;
We could do what we chose with the land, it was
ours;
And for us the brook murmured that ran by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late;
And often, like one overburthened with sin,
With my hand on the latch of the half-opened gate,
I look at the fields—but I cannot go in!

When I walk by the hedge on a bright summer's day,
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's tree,
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,
"What ails you, that you must come creeping to me!"

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With our pastures about us, we could not be sad:
Our comfort was near if we ever were crossed;
But the blessings, and comfort, and wealth that we had,
We slighted them all,—and our birth-right was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son,
Who must now be a wanderer!—but peace to that strain!
Think of evening's repose when our labour was done,
The Sabbath's return—and its leisure's soft chain!

And in sickness, if night had been sparing of sleep,
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I stood,
Looking down on the kine, and our treasure of sheep
That besprinkled the field—'twas like youth in my blood!

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as a snail;
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with a sigh,
That follows the thought—We 've no land in the vale,
Save six feet of earth where our forefathers lie!

XXVII.

"*A little onward lend thy guiding hand*
To these dark steps, a little further on!"
—What trick of memory to *my* voice hath brought
This mournful iteration? For though Time,
The Conquerer, crowns the Conquered, on this brow
Planting his favourite silver diadem,

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Nor he, nor minister of his — intent
To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,
Though not unmenaced, among those who lean
Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.
— O my Antigone, beloved child!
Should that day come — but hark! the birds salute
The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the east;
For me, thy natural leader, once again
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst
A tottering Infant, with compliant stoop
From flower to flower supported; but to curb
Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er the lawn,
Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge
Of foaming torrents. — From thy orisons
Come forth; and, while the morning air is yet
Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,
Let me, thy happy Guide, now point thy way,
And now precede thee, winding to and fro,
Till we by perseverance gain the top
Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous
Kindles intense desire for powers withheld
From this corporeal frame; whereon who stands,
Is seized with strong incitement to push forth
His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge — dread thought!
For pastime plunge — into the "abrupt abyss,"
Where Ravens spread their plumy vans, at ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I conduct
Through woods and spacious forests, — to behold

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There, how the Original of human art,
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and erects
Her temples, fearless for the stately work,
Though waves in every breeze its high-arched roof,
And storms the pillars rock. But we such schools
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek
In the still summer noon, while beams of light,
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond
Traceably gliding through the dusk, recall
To mind the living presences of nuns;
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,
To Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, espoused.

Re-open now thy everlasting gates,
Thou Fane of Holy Writ! Ye classic Domes,
To these glad orbs from darksome bondage freed,
Unfold again your portals! Passage lies
Through you to heights more glorious still, and shades
More awful, where this Darling of my care,
Advancing with me hand in hand, may learn,
Without forsaking a too earnest world,
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,
And consecrate her life to truth and love.

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XXVIII.

SEPTEMBER,

1819.

The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields
Are hung, as if with golden shields,
Bright trophies of the sun!
Like a fair sister of the sky,
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,
The Mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove
Albeit uninspired by love,
By love untaught to ring,
May well afford to mortal ear
An impulse more profoundly dear
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat
In Nature's struggling frame,
Some region of impatient life;
And jealousy, and quivering strife,
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy; — while I hear
These vespers of another year,
This hymn of thanks and praise,
My spirit seems to mount above
The anxieties of human love,
And earth's precarious days.

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But list! — though winter storms be nigh,
Unchecked is that soft harmony:
There lives Who can provide
For all his creatures; and in Him,
Even like the radiant Seraphim,
These Choristers confide.

XXIX.

UPON THE SAME OCCASION.

Departing Summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of Spring;
That calls from yonder leafy shade
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely caroling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
Such tribute as to Winter chill
The lonely red-breast pays!
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social Warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sear,
And yellow on the bough: —
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!
Ye myrtle wreaths, your frangrance shed
Around a younger brow!

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Yet will I temperately rejoice ;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of undiscordant themes ;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal extacies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile ;
But some their function have disclaimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain's earliest dawn ;
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of Nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
By winged Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit ;

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Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
With passion's finest finger swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculanean lore,
What rapture could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
One precious, tender-hearted scroll
Of pure Simonides!

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
Of poesy; a bursting forth
Of Genius from the dust:
What Horace gloried to behold,
What Maro loved, shall we unfold?
Can haughty Time be just!

XXX.

DION.

(SEE PLUTARCH.)

I.

FAIR is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,
Bears him on while proudly sailing
He leaves behind a moon-illumined wake:
Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve

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Fashions his neck into a goodly curve;
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs
To which, on some unruffled morning, clings
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows!
— Behold! — as with a gushing impulse heaves
That downy prow, and softly cleaves
The mirror of the crystal flood,
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,
And pendant rocks, where'er, in gliding state,
Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate
Or rival, save the Queen of night
Showering down a silver light,
From heaven, upon her chosen favourite!

II.

So pure, so bright, so fitted to embrace,
Where'er he turned, a natural grace
Of haughtiness without pretence,
And to unfold a still magnificence,
Was princely Dion, in the power
And beauty of his happier hour.
Nor less the homage that was seen to wait
On Dion's virtues, when the lunar beam
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
Fell round him in the grove of Academe,
Softening their inbred dignity austere; —
That he, not too elate
With self-sufficing solitude,
But with majestic lowliness endued,

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Might in the universal bosom reign,
And from affectionate observance gain
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

III.

Five thousand warriors — O the rapturous day!
Each crowned with flowers, and armed with spear
and shield,
Or ruder weapon which their course might yield,
To Syracuse advance in bright array.
Who leads them on? — The anxious People see
Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,
He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
And in a white, far-beaming, corslet clad!
Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear
The Gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,
Salute those Strangers as a holy train
Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)
That brought their precious liberty again.
Lo! whenthe gates are entered, on each hand,
Down the long street, rich goblets filled with wine
In seemly order stand,
On tables set, as if for rites divine; —
And, wheresoe'er the great Deliverer passed,
Fruits were strewn before his eye,
And flowers upon his person cast
In boundless prodigality;
Nor did the general voice abstain from prayer,
Invoking Dion's tutelary care,
As if a very Deity he were!

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IV.

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and mourn
Illyssus, bending o'er thy classic urn!
Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads
Your once-sweet memory, studious walks and shades!
For him who to divinity aspired,
Not on the breath of popular applause,
But through dependance on the sacred laws
Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt retired,
Intent to trace the ideal path of right
(More fair than heaven's broad causeway paved with stars)
Which Dion learned to measure with delight;
But he hath overleaped the eternal bars;
And, following guides whose craft holds no consent
With aught that breathes the ethereal element,
Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood
Unjustly shed, though for the public good.
Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,
Hollow excuses — and triumphant pain;
And oft his cogitations sink as low
As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,
The heaviest plummet of despair can go —
But whence that sudden check? — that fearful start!
He hears an uncouth sound —
Anon his lifted eyes
Saw at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,
A Shape, of more than mortal size
And hideous aspect, stalking round and round!

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A woman's garb the Phantom wore,
And fiercely swept the marble floor,—
Like Auster whirling to and fro,
His force on Caspian foam to try;
Or Boreas when he scours the snow
That skins the plains of Thessaly,
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops
His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

V.

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—
No pause admitted—no design avowed!
"Avaunt, inexplicable Guest!—avaunt
Intrusive Presence!—Let me rather see
The coronal that coiling vipers make;
The torch that flames with many a lurid flake,
And the long train of doleful pageantry
Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies haunt,
Who, while they struggle from the scourge to flee,
Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,
And, in their anguish, bear what other minds have borne!"

VI.

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call,
Will not depart when mortal voices bid;
Lords of the visionary Eye whose lid,
Once raised, remains aghast and will not fall!

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Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement
Obeys a mystical intent!
Your Minister would brush away
The spots that to my soul adhere;
But should she labour night and day,
They will not, cannot disappear.—
Whence angry perturbations,—and that look
Which no Philosophy can brook!

VII.

Ill-fated Chief! there are whose hopes are built
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name;
Who, through the portal of one moment's guilt,
Pursue thee with their deadly aim!
O matchless perfidy! portentous lust
Of monstrous crime!—that horror-striking blade,
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
The noble Syracusan low in dust!
Shudder the walls—the marble city wept—
And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh;
But in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,
As he had fallen, in magnanimity
Of spirit too capacious to require
That Destiny her course should change; too just
To his own native greatness to desire
That wretched boon, days lengthened by mistrust.
So were the hopeless troubles, that involved
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
Released from life and cares of princely state,
He left this moral grafted on his Fate,

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" Him only pleasure leads, and peace attends;
Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,
Whose means are fair and spotless as his ends."

XXXI.

ODE TO DUTY.

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a Light to guide, a Rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not:
May joy be theirs while life shall last!
And Thou, if they should totter, teach them to
stand fast!

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.

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And blest are they who in the main
This faith, even now, do entertain:
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
Full oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task imposed, from day to day;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose which ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we any thing so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds;
And Fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

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To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh! let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live!

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POEMS

ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents will have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, or renew the gratification of such Feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

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I.

POEMS

ON THE

NAMING OF PLACES.

It was an April morning: fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves appeared as if in haste
To spur the steps of June; as if their shades
Of *various* green were hindrances that stood
Between them and their object: yet, meanwhile,
There was such deep contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, seemed as though the countenance
With which it looked on this delightful day
Were native to the summer. — Up the brook
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,

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Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the Lamb,
The Shepherd's Dog, the Linnet and the Thrush
Vied with this Waterfall, and made a song
Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here;
But 'twas the foliage of the rocks, the birch,
The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
And on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,
A single mountain Cottage might be seen.
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
"Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,
My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."
—— Soon did the spot become my other home,
My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

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II.

TO JOANNA.

Amid the smoke of cities did you pass
Your time of early youth; and there you learned,
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living Beings by your own fire-side,
With such a strong devotion, that your heart
Is slow towards the sympathies of them
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
Joanna! and I guess, since you have been
So distant from us now for two long years,
That you will gladly listen to discourse
However trivial, if you thence are taught
That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
Their ancient neighbour, the old Steeple tower,
The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
Came forth to greet me; and when he had asked,
"How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid!
And when will she return to us?" he paused;
And, after short exchange of village news,

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He with grave looks demanded, for what cause,
Reviving obsolete Idolatry,
I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
Of formidable size had chisseled out
Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
Above the Rotha, by the forest side.
— Now, by those dear immunities of heart
Engendered betwixt malice and true love,
I was not loth to be so catechized,
And this was my reply : — " As it befel,
One summer morning we had walked abroad
At break of day, Joanna and myself.
— 'Twas that delightful season, when the broom,
Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,
Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks ;
And when we came in front of that tall rock
Which looks towards the East, I there stopped short,
And traced the lofty barrier with my eye
From base to summit ; such delight I found
To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
That intermixture of delicious hues,
Along so vast a surface, all at once,
In one impression, by connecting force
Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.
— When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
The rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again :

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That ancient Woman seated on Helm-Crag
Was ready with her cavern: Hammer-Scar,
And the tall Steep of Silver-How, sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg heard,
And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone:
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the Lady's voice, — old Skiddaw blew
His speaking trumpet; — back out of the clouds
Of Glaramara southward came the voice;
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.
— Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
Who in the hey-day of astonishment
Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
A work accomplished by the brotherhood
Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched
With dreams and visionary impulses,
Is not for me to tell; but sure I am
That there was a loud uproar in the hills:
And, while we both were listening, to my side
The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
To shelter from some object of her fear.
— And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
Beneath this rock, at sun-rise, on a calm
And silent morning, I sat down, and there,
In memory of affections old and true,
I chisseled out in those rude characters
Joanna's name upon the living stone.
And I, and all who dwell by my fire-side,
Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

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Note. — In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of Time, and the rudeness of the Workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls into Wynander. On Helm-Crag, that impressive single Mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an Old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those Fissures or Caverns, which in the language of the country are called Dungeons. Most of the Mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

III.

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills
The last that parleys with the setting sun.
We can behold it from our Orchard-seat;
And, when at evening we pursue our walk
Along the public way, this Cliff, so high
Above us, and so distant in its height,
Is visible; and often seems to send
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
And She who dwells with me, whom I have loved
With such communion, that no place on earth

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Can ever be a solitude to me,
Hath to this lonely summit given my Name.

IV.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
A rude and natural causeway, interposed
Between the water and a winding slope
Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shores
Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy.
And there, myself and two beloved Friends,
One calm September morning, ere the mist
Had altogether yielded to the sun,
Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.
—— Ill suits the road with one in haste, but we
Played with our time; and, as we strolled along,
It was our occupation to observe
Such objects as the waves had tossed ashore,
Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered bough,
Each on the other heaped, along the line
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
Suddenly halting now — a lifeless stand!
And starting off again with freak as sudden;
In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
Making report of an invisible breeze

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That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
Its playmate, rather say its moving soul.
——And often, trifling with a privilege
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
And now the other, to point out, perchance
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too fair
Either to be divided from the place
On which it grew, or to be left alone
To its own beauty. Many such there are,
Fair Ferns and Flowers, and chiefly that tall Fern
So stately, of the Queen Osmunda named;
Plant lovelier in its own retired abode
On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the side
Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
Sole-sitting by the shores of old Romance.
— So fared we that sweet morning: from the fields
Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth
Of Reapers, Men and Women, Boys and Girls.
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced
Along the indented shore; when suddenly,
Through a thin veil of glittering haze, we saw,
Before us, on a point of jutting land,
The tall and upright figure of a Man
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
Angling beside the margin of the lake.
That way we turned our steps; nor was it long
Ere, making ready comments on the sight
Which then we saw, with one and the same voice
Did all cry out, that he must be indeed

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An Idler, he who thus could lose a day
Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's hire
Is ample, and some little might be stored
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time.
Thus talking of that Peasant we approached
Close to the spot where with his rod and line
He stood alone ; whereat he turned his head
To greet us — and we saw a Man worn down
By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
That for my single self I looked at them,
Forgetful of the body they sustained. —
Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
The Man was using his best skill to gain
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
That knew not of his wants. I will not say
What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
With all its lovely images, was changed
To serious musing and to self-reproach.
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
What need there is to be reserved in speech,
And temper all our thoughts with charity.
— Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
The same admonishment, have called the place
By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
As e'er by Mariner was given to Bay
Or Foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;
And Point Rash-Judgment is the Name it bears.

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V.

TO M. H.

Our walk was far among the ancient trees;
There was no road, nor any woodman's path;
But the thick umbrage, checking the wild growth
Of weed and sapling, on the soft green turf
Beneath the branches, of itself had made
A track, which brought us to a slip of lawn,
And a small bed of water in the woods.
All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
On its firm margin, even as from a Well,
Or some Stone-bason which the Herdsman's hand
Had shaped for their refreshment; nor did sun,
Or wind from any quarter, ever come,
But as a blessing, to this calm recess,
This glade of water and this one green field.
The spot was made by Nature for herself.
The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
Unknown to them: but it is beautiful;
And if a man should plant his cottage near,
Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
And blend its waters with his daily meal,
He would so love it that in his death-hour
Its image would survive among his thoughts:
And therefore, my sweet Mary, this still Nook,
With all its beeches, we have named from You.

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VI.

When, to the attractions of the busy World,
Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
Sharp season followed of continual storm
In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
At a short distance from my Cottage, stands
A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
To hasten, for I found beneath the roof
Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.
Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I loth
To sympathize with vulgar coppice Birds
That, for protection from the nipping blast,
Hither repaired. — A single beech-tree grew
Within this grove of firs; and, on the fork
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;
A last year's nest, conspicuously built
At such small elevation from the ground
As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
Of nature and of love had made their home
Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,

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Would watch my motion with suspicious stare,
From the remotest outskirts of the grove, —
Some nook where they had made their final stand,
Huddling together from two fears — the fear
Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
In such perplexed and intricate array,
That vainly did I seek, between their stems,
A length of open space, — where to and fro
My feet might move without concern or care:
And, baffled thus, before the storm relaxed,
I ceased that Shelter to frequent, — and prized,
Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright April day,
By chance retiring from the glare of noon
To this forsaken covert, there I found
A hoary path-way traced between the trees,
And winding on with such an easy line
Along a natural opening, that I stood
Much wondering at my own simplicity
How I could e'er have made a fruitless search
For what was now so obvious. At the sight
Conviction also flashed upon my mind
That this same path (within the shady grove
Begun and ended) by my Brother's steps
Had been impressed. — To sojourn a short while
Beneath my roof, He from the barren seas

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Had newly come — a cherished Visitant!
And much did it delight me to perceive
That, to this opportune recess allured,
He had surveyed it with a finer eye,
A heart more wakeful; that, more loth to part
From place so lovely, he had worn the track
By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
In that habitual restlessness of foot
With which the sailor measures o'er and o'er
His short domain upon the Vessel's deck,
While she is travelling through the dreary Sea.
When Thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,
And taken thy first leave of those green hills
And rocks that were the play-ground of thy Youth,
Year followed year, my Brother; and we two,
Conversing not, knew little in what mould
Each other's minds were fashioned; and at length,
When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
Between us there was little other bond
Than common feelings of fraternal love.
But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
Undying recollections; Nature there
Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she still
Was with thee; and even so didst thou become
A *silent* Poet; from the solitude
Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
— Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone;
And now I call the pathway by thy name,

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And love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong:
And there I sit at evening, when the steep
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's placid Lake,
And one green Island, gleam between the stems
Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
Muttering the Verses which I muttered first
Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
Art pacing to and fro the Vessel's deck
In some far region, here, while o'er my head,
At every impulse of the moving breeze,
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
Alone I tread this path;—for aught I know,
Timing my steps to thine; and, with a store
Of undistinguishable sympathies,
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.

Note.—This wish was not granted; the lamented person, not long after, perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

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INSCRIPTIONS.

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INSCRIPTIONS.

I.

In the Grounds of Coleorton, the Seat of Sir George Beaumont, Bart. Leicestershire.

THE embowering Rose, the Acacia, and the Pine,
Shall not unwillingly their place resign;
If but the Cedar thrive that near them stands,
Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.
One wooed the silent Art with studious pains,—
These Groves have heard the Other's pensive strains;
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
By interchange of knowledge and delight.
May Nature's kindliest powers sustain the Tree,
And Love protect it from all injury!
And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,
And to a favourite resting-place invite,
For coolness grateful and a sober light;
Here may some Painter sit in future days,
Some future Poet meditate his lays;
Not mindless of that distant age renowned
When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,
The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
In civil conflict met on Bosworth Field;
And of that famous Youth, full soon removed,
From earth, perhaps by Shakespear's self approved,
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend beloved.

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II.

In a Garden of the same.

Oft is the Medal faithful to its trust
When Temples, Columns, Towers are laid in dust;
And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
That things obscure and small outlive the great:
Hence, when yon Mansion and the flowery trim
Of this fair Garden, and its alleys dim,
And all its stately trees, are passed away,
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
Perchance may still survive.—And be it known
That it was scooped within the living stone,—
Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains;
But by an industry that wrought in love,
With help from female hands, that proudly strove
To shape the work, what time these walks and bowers
Were framed, to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

III.

Written at the request of Sir George Beaumont, Bart. and in his Name, for an Urn, placed by him at the Termination of a newly-planted Avenue, in the same grounds.

Ye Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,
Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's return;

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And be not slow a stately growth to rear
Of Pillars, branching off from year to year,
Till they have learned to frame a darksome Aisle;—
That may recal to mind that awful Pile
Where Reynolds, 'mid our Country's noblest Dead,
In the last sanctity of fame is laid.
— There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear:
Hence, on my patrimonial Grounds, have I
Raised this frail tribute to his memory,
From youth a zealous follower of the Art
That he professed, attached to him in heart;
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

IV.

For a Seat in the Groves of Coleorton.

Beneath yon eastern Ridge, the craggy Bound,
Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground,
Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from thy view,
The ivied Ruins of forlorn Grace Dieu;
Erst a religious House, which day and night
With hymns resounded, and the chaunted rite:
And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth
To honourable Men of various worth:

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There, on the margin of a Streamlet wild,
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager Child;
There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,
Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks;
Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams
Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
With which his genius shook the buskined Stage.
Communities are lost, and Empires die,—
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;
They perish; — but the Intellect can raise,
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

V.

Written with a Pencil upon a Stone in the Wall of the House (an Out-house) on the Island at Grasmere.

Rude is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
Proportions more harmonious, and approached
To somewhat of a closer fellowship
With the ideal grace. Yet as it is
Do take it in good part: — alas the poor
Vitruvius of our village, had no help
From the great City; never, on the leaves
Of red Morocco folio, saw displayed
The skeletons and pre-existing ghosts
Of Beauties yet unborn, the rustic Box,
Snug Cot, with Coach-house, Shed, and Hermitage.

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Thou seest a homely Pile, yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
And hither does one Poet sometimes row
His Pinnace, a small vagrant Barge, up-piled
With plenteous store of heath and withered fern,
(A lading which he with his sickle cuts
Among the mountains) and beneath this roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the Sheep,
Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own Household: nor, while from his bed
He through that door-place looks toward the lake
And to the stirring breezes, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep,
Fair sights — and visions of romantic joy!

VI.

Written with a Slate-pencil, on a Stone, on the Side of the Mountain of Black Comb.

Stay, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy limbs
On this commodious Seat! for much remains
Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
Of this huge Eminence, —— from blackness named,
And, to far-travelled storms of sea and land,
A favourite spot of tournament and war!

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But thee may no such boisterous visitants
Molest; may gentle breezes fan thy brow;
And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
From centre to circumference, unveiled!
Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,
That, on the summit whither thou art bound,
A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,
With books supplied and instruments of art,
To measure height and distance; lonely task,
Week after week pursued! — To him was given
Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed
On timid man) of Nature's processes
Upon the exalted hills. He made report
That once, while there he plied his studious work
Within that canvass Dwelling, suddenly
The many-coloured map before his eyes
Became invisible: for all around
Had darkness fallen — unthreatened, unproclaimed —
As if the golden day itself had been
Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,
In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland: its base covers a much greater extent of ground than any other mountain in these parts; and, from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive view than any other point in Britian. See Vol. ii. p. 10.

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VII.

Written with a Slate-pencil, upon a Stone, the largest of a Heap lying near a deserted Quarry, upon one of the Islands at Rydale.

STRANGER! this billock of mis-shapen stones
Is not a Ruin of the ancient time,
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
Of some old British Chief: 'tis nothing more
Than the rude embryo of a little Dome
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built
Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
That from the shore a full grown man might wade,
And make himself a freeman of this spot
At any hour he chose, the Knight forthwith
Desisted, and the quarry, and the mound
Are monuments of his unfinished task. —
The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
Was once selected as the corner-stone
Of the intended Pile, which would have been
Some quaint odd play-thing of elaborate skill,
So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
And other little Builders who dwell here,
Had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
For old Sir William was a gentle Knight
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
And for the outrage which he had devised
Entire forgiveness! —— But if thou art one

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On fire with thy impatience to become
An inmate of these mountains, — if, disturbed
By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
Out of the quiet rock the elements
Of thy trim mansion destined soon to blaze
In snow-white splendour,— think again, and, taught
By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose;
There let the vernal Slow-worm sun himself,
And let the Red-breast hop from stone to stone.

VIII.

Inscriptions supposed to be found in and near a Hermit's Cell.

1.

Hopes what are they? — Beads of morning
Strung on slender blades of grass;
Or a spider's web adorning
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy?
Whispering harm where harm is not;
And deluding the unwary
Till the fatal bolt is shot!

What is glory? — in the socket
See how dying tapers fare!
What is pride? — a whizzing rocket
That would emulate a star.

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What is friendship ? — do not trust her,
Nor the vows which she has made ;
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth ? — a staff rejected ;
Duty ? — an unwelcome clog ;
Joy ? — a dazzling moon reflected
In a swamp or watery bog ;

Bright, as if through ether steering,
To the Traveller's eye it shone :
He hath hailed it re-appearing —
And as quickly it is gone ;

Gone, as if for ever hidden,
Or mis-shapen to the sight ;
And by sullen weeds forbidden
To resume its native light.

What is youth ? — a dancing billow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before !)
Age ? — a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace ? — when pain is over,
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sigh discover
That precedes the passing knell !

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IX.

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK.

2.

Pause, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,
Where silence yields reluctantly
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,
And fear not lest an idle sound
Of words unsuited to the place,
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,
Uphold a Monument as fair
As Church or Abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,
Like marble white, like ether pure;
As if beneath some hero lay,
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed;
And, ever as the sun shone forth,
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But Frost had reared the gorgeous Pile
Unsound as those which fortune builds;

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To undermine with secret guile,
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground;
And naked left this dripping Rock,
With shapeless ruin spread around!

X.

3.

Hast thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts! — a wind-swept meadow
Mimicking a troubled sea;
Such is life; — and death a shadow
From the rock eternity!

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XI.

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

4.

Troubled long with warring notions,
Long impatient of thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this craggy rent,
If my spirit toss and welter
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal well;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,
Would my Life present to thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine Tranquillity!

XII.

5.

Not seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;

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Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue;
And if she trust the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord!
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace with suppliant knee;
And peace was given, — nor peace alone,
But faith, and hope, and extacy!

XIII.

For the Spot where the Hermitage stood on St. Herbert's Island, Derwent-Water.

This Island, guarded from profane approach
By mountains high and waters widely spread,
Is that recess to which St. Herbert came
In life's decline: a self-secluded Man,

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After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things.

— Stranger! this shapeless heap of stones and earth
(Long be its mossy covering undisturbed!)
Is reverenced as a vestige of the abode,
In which, through many seasons, from the world,
Removed, and the affections of the world,
He dwelt in solitude. — But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And, when within his cave
Alone he knelt before the crucifix
While o'er the Lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he: — as our Chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day,
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

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POEMS

REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.

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I.

THE

OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

A DESCRIPTION.

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk;
And he was seated, by the highway side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged Man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
That overlays the pile; and, from a bag
All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one;
And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
Of idle computation. In the sun,
Upon the second step of that small pile,
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
He sat, and ate his food in solitude:
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers

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Fell on the ground; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
Approached within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known; and then
He was so old, he seems not older now;
He travels on, a solitary Man,
So helpless in appearance, that for him
The sauntering Horseman-traveller does not throw
With careless hand his alms upon the ground,
But stops, — that he may safely lodge the coin
Within the old Man's hat; nor quits him so,
But still, when he has given his horse the rein,
Towards the aged Beggar turns a look
Side-long — and half-reverted. She who tends
The Toll-gate, when in summer at her door
She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,
And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
The Post-boy when his rattling wheels o'ertake
The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
Shouts to him from behind; and, if perchance
The old Man does not change his course, the Boy
Turns with less noisy wheels to the road-side,
And passes gently by — without a curse
Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.
He travels on, a solitary Man, —
His age has no companion. On the ground
His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
They move along the ground; and, evermore,
Instead of common and habitual sight

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Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
And the blue sky, one little span of earth
Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
Bowbent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
He plies his weary journey; seeing still,
And never knowing that he sees, some straw,
Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
Impressed on the white road, — in the same line,
At distance still the same. Poor Traveller!
His staff trails with him; scarcely do his feet
Disturb the summer dust; he is so still
In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
Ere he have passed the door, will turn away,
Weary of barking at him. Boys and Girls,
The vacant and the busy, Maids and Youths,
And Urchin newly breeched — all pass him by:
Him even the slow-paced Waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this Man useless. — Statesmen! ye
Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands
To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud,
Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate
Your talents, power, and wisdom, deem him not
A burthen of the earth! 'Tis Nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good — a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being

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Inseparably linked. While thus he creeps
From door to door, the Villagers in him
Behold a record which together binds
Past deeds and offices of charity,
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
Among the farms and solitary huts,
Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,
Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
The mild necessity of use compels
To acts of love; and habit does the work
Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy
Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
Doth find itself insensibly disposed
To virtue and true goodness. Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
Will live, and spread, and kindle; minds like these,
In childhood, from this solitary Being,
This helpless Wanderer, have perchance received
(A thing more precious far than all that books
Or the solicitudes of love can do!)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
In which they found their kindred with a world
Where want and sorrow were. The easy Man

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Who sits at his own door, — and, like the pear
Which overhangs his head from the green wall,
Feeds in the sunshine ; the robust and young,
The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
Of their own kindred ; — all behold in him
A silent monitor, which on their minds
Must needs impress a transitory thought
Of self-congratulation, to the heart
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
His charters and exemptions : and, perchance,
Though he to no one give the fortitude
And circumspection needful to preserve
His present blessings, and to husband up
The respite of the season, he, at least,
And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further. —— Many, I believe, there are
Who live a life of virtuous decency,
Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
No self-reproach ; who of the moral law
Established in the land where they abide
Are strict observers ; and not negligent,
Meanwhile, in any tenderness of heart
Or act of love to those with whom they dwell,
Their kindred, and the children of their blood.
Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace !
— But of the poor man ask, the abject poor,
Go, and demand of him, if there be here
In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
And these inevitable charities,

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Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?
No — Man is dear to Man; the poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life
When they can know and feel that they have been,
Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
As needed kindness, for this single cause,
That we have all of us one human heart.
— Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,
My Neighhour, when with punctual care, each week
Duly as Friday comes, though prest herself
By her own wants, she from her chest of meal
Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
Returning with exhilarated heart,
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And while in that vast solitude to which
The tide of things has led him, he appears
To breathe and live but for himself alone,
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
The good which the benignant law of Heaven
Has hung around him: and, while life is his,
Still let him prompt the unlettered Villagers
To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
— Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
The freshness of the valleys; let his blood
Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;
And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath

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Beat his grey locks against his withered face.
Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
Gives the last human interest to his heart.
May never House, misnamed of Industry,
Make him a captive! for that pent-up din,
Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
Be his the natural silence of old age!
Let him be free of mountain solitudes:
And have around him, whether heard or not,
The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have now
Been doomed so long to settle on the earth
That not without some effort they behold
The countenance of the horizontal sun,
Rising or setting, let the light at least
Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
Beneath the trees, or by the grassy bank
Of high-way side, and with the little birds
Share his chance-gathered meal; and, finally,
As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
So in the eye of Nature let him die!

II.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,

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And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town;
His staff is a sceptre — his grey hairs a crown;
Erect as a sunflower he stands, and the streak
Of the unfaded rose is expressed on his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn, — 'mid the joy
Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a Boy:
There fashioned that countenance, which, in spite of a stain
That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was; and his house far and near
Was the boast of the Country for excellent cheer:
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his good ale.

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
His fields seemed to know what their Master was doing;
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
All caught the infection — as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl, —
The fields better suited the ease of his Soul:
He strayed through the fields like an indolent Wight,
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought, and the Poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door:
He gave them the best that he had; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

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Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm ;
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out, — he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went, — all were free with their money ;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey
That they dreamt not of dearth ; — He continued his rounds,
Knocked here — and knocked there, pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with this ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself :
Then, (what is too true,) without hinting a word,
Turned his back on the Country ; and off like a Bird.

You lift up your eyes ! — but I guess that you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London — a sad emigration I ween —
With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the green ;
And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a Crow on the sands.

All trades, as needs was, did old Adam assume, —
Served as Stable-boy, Errand-boy, Porter, and Groom ;
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

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He seems ten birth-days younger, is green and is stout ;
Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he 's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
But often his mind is compelled to demur,
And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the Town like a Stranger is he,
Like one whose own Country 's far over the sea ;
And Nature, while through the great City he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprize.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue ;
Like a Maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What 's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats ?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets ;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he 'd twelve Reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruit and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor Winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a Waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw ;

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With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a dream.

Up the Hay-market hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in the Waggon, and smells at the hay;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair, —
If you pass by at morning you 'll meet with him there:
The breath of the Cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, Old Adam! when low thou art laid
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

III.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

See Vol. I. 282. 284.

There is a Flower, the Lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun itself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distressed,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest,

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But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed,
And recognized it, though an altered Form,
Now standing forth an offering to the Blast,
And buffeted at will by Rain and Storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

The sunshine may not bless it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favorite — then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner — behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

IV.

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.

A SKETCH.

The little hedge-row birds,
That peck along the road, regard him not.
He travels on, and in his face, his step,
His gait, is one expression; every limb,
His look and bending figure, all bespeak
A man who does not move with pain, but moves

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With thought. — He is insensibly subdued
To settled quiet: he is one by whom
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom
Long patience hath such mild composure given,
That patience now doth seem a thing of which
He hath no need. He is by nature led
To peace so perfect, that the young behold
With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

V.

THE TWO THIEVES;

OR

THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

O now that the genius of Bewick were mine,
And the skill which he learned on the banks of the Tyne!
Then the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical hand!
Book-learning and books should be banished the land:
And for hunger and thirst, and such troublesome calls,
Every Ale-house should then have a feast on its walls.

The Traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair;
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would he care!
For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and his Sheaves,
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two Thieves?

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The One, yet unbreeched, is not three birth-days old,
His Grandsire that age more than thirty times told ;
There are ninety good seasons of fair and fowl weather
Between them, and both go a-stealing together.

With chips is the Carpenter strewing his floor ?
Is a cart-load of peats at an old Woman's door ?
Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide !
And his Grandson 's as busy at work by his side.

Old Daniel begins, he stops short — and his eye,
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly.
'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires :
And what if he cherished his purse ? 'Twas no more
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one
Who went something further than others have gone :
And now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;
You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The Pair sally forth hand in hand : ere the sun
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun :
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
This Child but half knows it, and that not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,
And each, in his turn, is both leader and led ;
And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,
Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

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Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they roam;
The gray-headed Sire has a daughter at home,
Who will gladly repair all the damage that 's done;
And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

Old Man! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side:
Long yet mayst thou live! for a teacher we see
That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

VI.

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.

At Jedborough, in the course of a Tour in Scotland, my companion and I went into private Lodgings for a few days; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

Age! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers!
And call a train of laughing Hours;
And bid them dance, and bid them sing;
And thou too mingle in the Ring!
Take to thy heart a new delight;
If not, make merry in despite,
For there is one who scorns thy power.
But dance! for, under Jedborough Tower,
There liveth in the prime of glee,
A Woman, whose years are seventy-three,
And she will dance and sing with thee.

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Nay! start not at that Figure — there!
Him who is rooted to his chair!
Look at him — look again! for He
Hath long been of thy Family.
With legs that move not, if they can,
And useless arms, a Trunk of Man,
He sits, and with a vacant eye;
A Sight to make a Stranger sigh!
Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom:
His world is in this single room:
Is this a place for mirth and cheer?
Can merry-making enter here?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
Of him in that forlorn estate!
He breathes a subterraneous damp;
But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:
He is as mute as Jedborough Tower;
She jocund as it was of yore,
With all its bravery on; in times,
When all alive with merry chimes,
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
It roused the Vale to Holiday.
I praise thee, Matron! and thy due
Is praise; heroic praise, and true!
With admiration I behold
Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:
Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
The picture of a life well-spent:
This do I see; and something more;
A strength unthought of heretofore!

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Delighted am I for thy sake ;
And yet a higher joy partake.
Our Human nature throws away
Its second Twilight, and looks gay :
A Land of promise and of pride
Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed
Within himself, as seems ; composed ;
To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
The strife of happiness and pain,
Utterly dead ! yet, in the guise
Of little Infants, when their eyes
Begin to follow to and fro
The persons that before them go,
He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
Her buoyant Spirit can prevail
Where common cheerfulness would fail ;
She strikes upon him with the heat
Of July Suns ; he feels it sweet ;
An animal delight though dim !
'Tis all that now remains for him !

I looked, I scanned her o'er and o'er ;
The more I looked I wondered more :
When suddenly I seemed to espy
A trouble in her strong black eye ;
A remnant of uneasy light,
A flash of something over-bright !
And soon she made this matter plain ;
And told me, in a thoughtful strain,

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That she had borne a heavy yoke,
Been stricken by a two-fold stroke;
Ill health of body; and had pined
Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it! — but let praise ascend
To Him who is our Lord and Friend!
Who from disease and suffering
Hath called for thee a second Spring;
Repaid thee for that sore distress
By no untimely joyousness;
Which makes of thine a blissful state;
And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

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EPITAPHS

AND

ELEGIAC POEMS.

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I.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

1.

Perhaps some needful service of the State
Drew Titus from the depth of studious bowers,
And doomed him to contend in faithless courts,
Where gold determines between right and wrong.
Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
And his pure native genius, lead him back
To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,
Whom he had early loved. And not in vain
Such course he held! Bologna's learned schools
Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and hung
With fondness on those sweet Nestorian strains.
There pleasure crowned his days; and all his thoughts
A roseate fragrance breathed.* — O human life,
That never art secure from dolorous change!
Behold a high injunction suddenly
To Arno's side conducts him, and he charmed
A Tuscan audience: but full soon was called
To the perpetual silence of the grave.

* Ivi vivea giocondo, e i suoi pensieri
Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original.

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Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
A Champion stedfast and invincible,
To quell the rage of literary War !

II.

2.

O Thou who movest onward with a mind
Intent upon thy way, pause though in haste !
'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born
Within Savona's walls of gentle blood.
On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate
To sacred studies ; and the Roman Shepherd
Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.
Much did I watch, much laboured ; nor had power
To escape from many and strange indignities ;
Was smitten by the great ones of the World
But did not fall, for virtue braves all shocks,
Upon herself resting immoveably.
Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,
And in his hands I saw a high reward
Stretched out for my acceptance — but Death came. —
Now, Reader, learn from this my fate — how false,
How treacherous to her promise is the World,
And trust in God — to whose eternal doom
Must bend the sceptered Potentates of Earth.

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III.

3.

THERE never breathed a man who when his life
Was closing might not of that life relate
Toils long and hard. — The Warrior will report
Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,
And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed
To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
Envy, and heart-inquietude, derived
From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.
I, who on Ship-board lived from earliest youth,
Could represent the countenance horrible
Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage
Of Auster and Boötes. Forty years
Over the well-steered Gallies did I rule : —
From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,
Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown ;
And the broad gulfs I traversed oft — and — oft :
Of every cloud which in the Heavens might stir
I knew the force ; and hence the rough sea's pride
Availed not to my Vessel's overthrow.
What noble pomp and frequent have not I
On regal decks beheld ! yet in the end
I learn that one poor moment can suffice
To equalize the lofty and the low.
We sail the sea of life — a *Calm* One finds,
And One a *Tempest* — and, the voyage o'er,

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Death is the quiet haven of us all.
If more of my condition ye would know,
Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang
Of noble parents: sixty years and three
Lived I —— then yielded to a slow disease.

IV.

4.

Destined to war from very infancy
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross.
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun
Hazard or toil; among the Sands was seen
Of Lybia, and not seldom, on the Banks
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
So lived I, and repined not at such fate;
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
That stripped of arms I to my end am brought
On the soft down of my paternal home.
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
How fleeting and how frail is human life.

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V.

5.

Not without heavy grief of heart did He,
On whom the duty fell, (for at that time
The Father sojourned in a distant Land,)
Deposit in the hollow of this Tomb
A Brother's Child, most tenderly beloved!
Francesco was the name the Youth had borne,
Pozzobonnelli his illustrious House;
And, when beneath this stone the Corse was laid,
The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.
Alas! the twentieth April of his life
Had scarcely flowered: and at this early time,
By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
That greatly cheered his Country: to his Kin
He promised comfort; and the flattering thoughts
His Friends had in their fondness entertained,*
He suffered not to languish or decay.
Now is there not good reason to break forth
Into a passionate lament? — O Soul!
Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,
Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air;
And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,
An everlasting spring! in memory
Of that delightful fragrance which was once,
From thy mild manners, quietly exhaled.

* In justice to the Author I subjoin the original.

——— e degli amici
Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

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VI.

6.

Pause, courteous Spirit! — Balbi supplicates
That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for him
Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer
A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.
This to the Dead by sacred right belongs;
All else is nothing — Did occasion suit
To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
Would ill suffice: for Plato's lore sublime,
And all the wisdom of the Stagyrite,
Enriched and beautified his studious mind:
With Archimedes also he conversed
As with a chosen Friend, nor did he leave
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which the Nymphs
Twine on the top of Pindus. — Finally,
Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
His ears he closed to listen to the Song
Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old;
And fixed his Pindus upon Lebanon.
A blessed Man! who of protracted days
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep;
But truly did *He* live his life. — Urbino
Take pride in him; — O Passenger farewell!

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VII.

LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk, one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

Loud is the Vale! the Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are gone,
A mighty Unison of streams!
Of all her Voices, One!

Loud is the Vale; — this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea;
Yon Star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain depressed,
Importunate and heavy load;*
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road;

And many thousands now are sad —
Wait the fulfilment of their fear;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss;
But when the Mighty pass away
What is it more than this,

* Importuna e grave salma.
Michael Angelo.

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That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return? —
Such ebb and flow must ever be;
Then wherefore should we mourn?

VIII.

LINES

Written, November 13. 1814, on a blank leaf in a Copy of the Author's Poem THE EXCURSION, upon hearing of the death of the late Vicar of Kendal.

To public notice, with reluctance strong,
Did I deliver this unfinished Song;
Yet for one happy issue; — and I look
With self-congratulation on the Book
Which pious, learned MURFITT saw and read; —
Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;
He conned the new-born Lay with grateful heart;
Foreboding not how soon he must depart,
Unweeting that to him the joy was given
Which good Men take with them from Earth to Heaven.

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IX.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I was thy Neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no sleep;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add a gleam,
* Of lustre, known to neither sea nor land,
But borrowed from the youthful Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile!
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;

Earlier text: after-wards restored.

* A light to sport with, and to shine on, or hide
At recollection, and a fearful dream.

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No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made:
And seen the soul of truth in every part;
A faith, a trust, that could not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new controul:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the
Friend,
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This Work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

Oh 'tis a passionate Work! — yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

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Farewell, farewell the Heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be born!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

X.

TO THE DAISY.

2935.297.

Sweet Flower! belike, one day, to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
I welcome thee once more:
But He, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he bent his way,
To govern and to guide:
His wish was gained: a little time
Would bring him back in manhood's prime,
And free for life, these hills to climb,
With all his wants supplied.

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And full of hope day followed day,
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight;
The May had then made all things green;
And, floating there in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen,
His pride and his delight!

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought!
In more than happy mood,
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers!
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word! — the Ship is gone; —
From her long course returns: — anon
Sets sail: — in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand:
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his Crew.

Ill-fated Vessel! — ghastly shock!
— At length delivered from the rock
The deep she hath regained;
And through the stormy night they steer,
Labouring for life, in hope and fear,
Towards a safer shore — how near,
Yet not to be attained!

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"Silence!" the brave Commander cried;
To that calm word a shriek replied,
It was the last death-shriek.
— A few appear by morning light,
Preserved upon the tall mast's height:
Oft in my Soul I see that sight;
But one dear remnant of the night —
For him in vain I seek.

Six weeks, beneath the moving sea,
He lay in slumber quietly;
Unforced, by wind or wave,
To quit the Ship for which he died,
(All claims of duty satisfied;)
And there they found him at her side;
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done,
For this, if other end were none,
That He, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last;

That neighbourhood of grove and field
To Him a resting-place should yield,
A meek Man and a brave!
The birds shall sing, and ocean make
A mournful murmur, for *his* sake;
And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and wake
Upon his senseless grave!

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XI.

INVOCATION TO THE EARTH,

February, 1816.

I.

"Rest, rest, perturbed Earth!
"Oh rest, thou doleful Mother of Mankind!"
A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than the wind:
"From regions where no evil thing has birth
"I come — thy stains to wash away,
"Thy cherished fetters to unbind,
"To open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.
"The Heavens are thronged with martyrs that have
risen
"From out thy noisome prison;
"The penal caverns groan
"With tens of thousands rent from off the tree
"Of hopeful life, — by Battle's whirlwind blown
"Into the deserts of Eternity.
"Unpitied havoc! Victims unlamented!
"But not on high, where madness is resented,
"And murder causes some sad tears to flow;
"Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
"The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly augmented.

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II.

" False Parent of Mankind !
" Obdurate, proud, and blind !
" I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
" Thy lost maternal heart to re-infuse !
" Scattering this far-fetched moisture from my wings,
" Upon the act a blessing I implore,
" Of which the rivers in their secret springs,
" The rivers stained so oft with human gore,
" Are conscious ; — may the like return no more !
" May Discord — for a Seraph's care
" Shall be attended with a bolder prayer —
" May she, who once disturbed the seats of bliss,
" These mortal spheres above,
" Be chained for ever to the black abyss !
" And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and love,
" And merciful desires, thy sanctity approve ! "

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,
And the pure vision closed in darkness infinite.

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ODE.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

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The Child is Father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

See vol. i. page 3.

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ODE.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Appareled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more!

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose, —
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the Birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.

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The Cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,—
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd Boy!

IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While the Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning;
And the Children are pulling,
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
— But there's a Tree, of many one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,

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Both of them speak of something that is gone :
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat :
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar ;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy ;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,

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And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his Mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his Father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her Equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

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VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom, on thy Being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The Years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX.

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed

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For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble, like a guilty Thing surprized!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us — cherish — and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither, —

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And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound !
We, in thought, will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May !
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be,
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering,
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And oh ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Think not of any severing of our loves !
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.

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I love the Brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet ;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live ;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears ;
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

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ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much loved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his Estate, with a view to fix upon the Site of a New Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season, — our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and, such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this Series, were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me, that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country, might advantageously be presented to view in Verse. Accordingly I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the Reader, was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprized to find that my Friend, Mr. Southey, was engaged, with similar views, in writing a concise His-

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tory of the Church *in* England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my Friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount,
January 24th, 1822.

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ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

PART FIRST.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

I.

INTRODUCTION.

I, who descended with glad step to chase
Cerulean Duddon from his cloud-fed spring,
And of my wild Companion dared to sing,
In verse that moved with strictly-measured pace;
I, who essayed the nobler stream to trace
Of Liberty, and smote the plausive string
Till the checked Torrent, fiercely combating,
In victory found her natural resting-place;
Now seek upon the heights of Time the source
Of a' holy River, on whose banks are found
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force;
Where, for delight of him who tracks its course,
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

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II.

CONJECTURES.

If there be Prophets on whose spirits rest
Past things, revealed like future, they can tell
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred Well
Of Christain Faith, this savage Island bless'd
With its first bounty. Wandering through the West,
Did holy [1] Paul awhile in Britain dwell,
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,
And with dread signs the nascent Stream invest?
Or He, whose bonds dropp'd off, whose prison doors
Flew open, by an Angel's voice unbarred?
Or some, of humbler name, to these wild shores
Storm-driven, who having seen the cup of woe
Pass from their Master, sojourned here to guard
The precious current they had taught to flow?

III.

TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS.

Screams round the Arch-Druid's brow the Sea-mew* — white
As Menai's foam; and towards the mystic ring

* This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the Deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

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Where Augurs stand, the future questioning,
Slowly the Cormorant aims her heavy flight,
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,
That, in the lapse of seasons, hath crept o'er
Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore:
Haughty the Bard; — can these meek doctrines blight
His transports? wither his heroic strains?
But all shall be fulfilled; — the Julian spear
A way first open'd; and, with Roman chains,
The tidings come of Jesus crucified;
They come — they spread — the weak, the suffering, hear;
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

IV.

DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION, &c.

Mercy and Love have met thee on thy road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of fire
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that Man bestowed!
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to God,
Ancient of Days! that to the eternal Sire
These jealous Ministers of Law aspire,
As to the one sole fount whence Wisdom flowed,
Justice, and Order. Tremblingly escaped,
As if with prescience of the coming storm,
That intimation when the stars were shaped;

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And yon thick woods maintain the primal truth
Debased by many a superstitious form,
That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

V.

UNCERTAINTY.

Darkness surrounds us; seeking, we are lost
On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian coves,
Or where the solitary Shepherd roves
Along the Plain of Sarum, by the Ghost
Of silently departed ages crossed;
And where the boatman of the Western Isles
Slackens his course — to mark those holy piles
Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.
Nor these, nor monuments of eldest fame,
Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays,
Nor Characters of Greek or Roman fame,
To an unquestionable Source have led;
Enough — if eyes that sought the fountain-head
In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

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VI.

PERSECUTION.

LAMENT! for Dioclesian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct
With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon linked,
Which God's ethereal store-houses afford
Against the Followers of the incarnate Lord
It rages; some are smitten in the field —
Some pierced beneath the unavailing shield
Of sacred home; — with pomp are others gor'd
And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban tried,
England's first Martyr! whom no threats could shake;
Self-offered Victim for his friend he died,
And for the faith — nor shall his name forsake
That Hill,[2] whose flowery platform seems to rise
By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice.

VII.

RECOVERY.

As when a storm hath ceased, the birds regain
Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim
Their nests, or chaunt a gratulating hymn
To the blue ether and bespangled plain;
Even so in many a re-constructed fane
Have the Survivors of this Storm renewed
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude;

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And solemn ceremonials they ordain
To celebrate their great deliverance ;
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their fear
That persecution, blind with rage extreme,
May not the less, thro' Heaven's mild countenace,
Even in her own despite, both feed and cheer ;
For all things are less dreadful than they seem.

VIII.

TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS.

Watch, and be firm ! for soul-subduing vice,
Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.
Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,
Their radiance thro' the woods, may yet suffice,
To sap your hardy virtue, and abate
Your love of him upon whose forehead sate
The crown of thorns ; whose life-blood flowed, the price
Of your redemption. Shun the insidious arts
That Rome provides, less dreading from her frown
Than from her wily praise, her peaceful gown,
Language, and letters ; — these, tho' fondly viewed
As humanizing graces, are but parts
And instruments of deadliest servitude !

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IX.

DISSENSIONS.

THAT heresies should strike (if truth be scanned
Presumptuously) their roots both wide and deep,
Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.
Lo ! Discord at the Altar dares to stand,
Lifting towards high Heaven her fiery brand,
A cherished Priestess of the new baptized !
But chastisement shall follow peace despised.
The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate land
By Rome abandoned ; vain are suppliant cries,
And prayers that would undo her forced farewell,
For she returns not. — Awed by her own knell,
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies,
Soon to become more dreaded enemies,
Than heartless misery called them to repel.

X.

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST THE BARBARIANS.

RISE ! — they *have* risen : of brave Aneurin ask
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious friends :
The spirit of Caractacus defends
The Patriots, animates their glorious task ; —
Amazement runs before the towering casque
Of Arthur, bearing thro' the stormy field

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The Virgin sculptured on his Christian shield : —
Stretched in the sunny light of Victory bask
The Host that followed Urien as he strode
O'er heaps of slain ; — from Cambrian wood and moss
Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross ;
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still abode
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring swords,
And everlasting deeds to burning words !

XI.

SAXON CONQUEST.

Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs[3] tossed from hill to hill —
For instant victory. But Heaven's high will
Permits a second and a darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed
The Relics of the sword flee to the mountains :
O wretched Land, whose tears have flowed like fountains !
Whose arts and honours in the dust are laid,
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth[4] ;
Intent, as fields and woods have given them birth,
To build their savage fortunes only there ;
Witness the foss, the barrow, and the girth
Of many a long-drawn rampart, green and bare !

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XII.

THE MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR.[5]

The oppression of the tumult — wrath and scorn —
The tribulation — and the gleaming blades —
Such is the impetuous spirit that pervades
The song of Taliesin* ; Ours shall mourn
The *unarmed* Host who by their prayers would turn
The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard the store
Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,
And Christian monuments, that now must burn
To senseless ashes. Mark! how all things swerve
From their known course, or pass away like steam;
Another language spreads from coast to coast;
Only perchance some melancholy Stream
And some indignant Hills old names preserve,
When laws, and creeds, and people, all are lost!

XIII.

CASUAL INCITEMENT.

A bright-haired company of youthful Slaves,
Beautiful Strangers, stand within the pale
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
Where Tiber's stream the glorious City laves:
ANGLI by name; and not an Angel waves

* Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

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His wing who seemeth lovelier in Heaven's eye
Than they appear to holy Gregory,
Who, having learnt that name, salvation craves
For Them, and for their Land. The earnest Sire,
His questions urging, feels in slender ties
Of chiming sound commanding sympathies;
De-irians — he would save them from God's ire;
Subjects of Saxon Ælla — they shall sing
Sweet Hallelujahs to the eternal King!

XIV.

GLAD TIDINGS.

For ever hallowed be this morning fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which ye tread,
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,
The pictured Saviour! — By Augustin led
They come — and onward travel without dread,
Chaunting in barbarous ears a tuneful prayer,
Sung for themselves, and those whom they would free!
Rich conquest waits them: — the tempestuous sea
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high,
And heeded not the voice of clashing swords,
These good men humble by a few bare words,
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

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XV.

PAULINUS.

But to remote Northumbria's royal Hall
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the School
Of Sorrow, still maintains a Heathen rule,
Who comes with functions Apostolical?
Mark him[6], of shoulders curved, and stature tall,
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre cheek,
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak;
A Man whose aspect doth at once appal,
And strike with reverence. The Monarch leans
Towards the Truths this Delegate propounds,
Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
With careful hesitation, — then convenes
A synod of his Counsellors, — give ear,
And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear!

XVI.

PERSUASION.

"Man's life is like a Sparrow[7], mighty King!
"That, stealing in while by the fire you sit
"Housed with rejoicing Friends, is seen to flit
"Safe from the storm, in comfort tarrying.
"Here did it enter — there on hasty wing
"Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;

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" But whence it came we know not, nor behold
" Whither it goes. Even such that transient Thing,
" The Human Soul; not utterly unknown
" While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;
" But from what world she came, what woe or weal
" On her departure waits, no tongue hath shewn;
" This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
" His be a welcome cordially bestowed!"

XVII.

CONVERSION.

Prompt transformation works the novel lore;
The Council closed, the Priest in full career
Rides forth, an armed Man, and hurls a spear
To desecrate the Fane which heretofore
He served in folly. — Woden falls — and Thor
Is overturned; the Mace, in battle heaved
(So might they dream) till Victory was achieved,
Drops — and the God himself is seen no more.
Temple and Altar sink — to hide their shame
Amid oblivious weeds. "O come to me
Ye heavy laden!" such the inviting voice
Heard near fresh streams[8], — and thousands, who rejoice
In the new Rite — the pledge of sanctity,
Shall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

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XVIII.

APOLOGY.

Nor scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend
The soul's eternal interests to promote:
Death, darkness, danger, are our natural lot;
And evil Spirits *may* our walk attend
For aught the wisest know or comprehend;
Then let the *good* be free to breathe a note
Of elevation — let their odours float
Around these Converts, and their glories blend,
Outshining nightly tapers, or the blaze
Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden cords
Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise
The soul to purer worlds: and *who* the line
Shall draw, the limits of the power define,
That even imperfect faith to Man affords?

XIX.

PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY.[9]

How beautiful your presence, how benign,
Servants of God! who not a thought will share
With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
Such Priest, when service worthy of his care
Has called him forth to breathe the common air,

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Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine
Descended; happy are the eyes that meet
The Apparition; evil thoughts are stayed
At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
A benediction from his voice or hand;
Whence grace, thro' which the heart can understand,
And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

XX.

OTHER INFLUENCES.

Ah! when the Frame, round which in love we clung,
Is chilled by death, does mutual service fail?
Is tender pity then of no avail?
Are intercessions of the fervent tongue
A waste of hope? — From this sad source have sprung
Rites that console the spirit, under grief
Which ill can brook more rational relief;
Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and dirges sung
For those whose doom is fix'd! The way is smooth
For Power that travels with the human heart: —
Confession ministers, the pang to soothe
In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.
Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,
Of your own mighty instruments beware!

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XXI.

SECLUSION.

Lance, shield, and sword relinquished — at his side
A Bead-roll, in his hand a clasped Book,
Or staff more harmless than a Shepherd's crook,
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world — to hide
His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent hour,
Do penitential cogitations cling:
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;
Yet, while they strangle without mercy, bring
For recompence their own perennial bower.

XXII.

CONTINUED.

Methinks that to some vacant Hermitage
My feet would rather turn — to some dry nook
Scoop'd out of living rock, and near a brook
Hurl'd down a mountain-cove from stage to stage,
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling rage
In the soft heaven of a translucent pool;

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Thence creeping under forest arches cool,
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage
Perchance would throng my dreams. A beechen bowl,
A maple dish, my furniture should be;
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting Owl
My night-watch; nor should e'er the crested Fowl
From thorp or vill his matins sound for me,
Tired of the world and all its industry.

XXIII.

REPROOF.

But what if One, thro' grove or flowery mead,
Indulging thus at will the creeping feet
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet
The hovering Shade of venerable Bede;
The Saint, the Scholar, from a circle freed
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
Of Learning, where he heard the billows beat
On a wild coast — rough monitors to feed
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt
Imposed on human kind, must first forget
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
Of a long life; and in the hour of death,
The last dear service of thy passing breath!*

* He expired in the act of concluding a translation of Saint John's Gospel.

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XXIV.

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND SHADES OF THE RELIGION.

By such examples moved to unbought pains,
The people work like congregated bees;[10]
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely rains
Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprize,
And peace, and equity. — Bold faith! yet rise
The sacred Towers for universal gains.
The Sensual think with reverence of the palms
Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the grave;
If penance be redeemable, thence alms
Flow to the Poor, and freedom to the Slave;
And, if full oft the Sanctuary save
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV.

MISSIONS AND TRAVELS.

Not sedentary all: there are who roam
To scatter seeds of Life on barbarous shores;
Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn floors
To seek the general Mart of Christendom;
Whence they, like richly laden Merchants, come
To their beloved Cells: — or shall we say
That, like the Red-cross Knight, they urge their way,

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To lead in memorable triumph home
Truth — their immortal Una? Babylon
Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,
Nor leaves her speech wherewith to clothe a sigh
That would lament her; Memphis, Tyre, are gone
With all their Arts — while classic Lore glides on
By these Religious saved for all posterity.

XXVI.

ALFRED.

Behold a Pupil of the Monkish gown,
The pious Alfred, King to Justice dear;
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;
Mirror of Princes! indigent Renown
Might range the starry ether for a crown
Equal to *his* deserts, who, like the year,
Pours forth his bounty, like the day doth cheer,
And awes like night with mercy-tempered frown.
Ease from this noble Miser of his time
No moment steals; pain narrows not his cares.[11]
Though small his kingdom as a spark or gem,
Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,
And Christian India gifts with Alfred shares
By sacred converse link'd with India's clime.

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XXVII.

HIS DESCENDANTS.

CAN aught survive to linger in the veins
Of kindred bodies — an essential power
That may not vanish in one fatal hour,
And wholly cast away terrestrial chains?
The race of Alfred covets glorious pains
When dangers threaten — dangers ever new!
Black tempests bursting — blacker still in view!
But manly sovereignty its hold retains;
The root sincere — the branches bold to strive
With the fierce storm; meanwhile, within the round
Of their protection, gentle virtues thrive;
As oft, 'mid some green plot of open ground,
Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,
The fostered hyacinths spread their purple bloom.

XXVIII.

INFLUENCE ABUSED.

URGED by Ambition, who with subtlest skill
Changes her means, — the Enthusiast as a dupe
Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,
And turn the instruments of good to ill,
Moulding the credulous People to his will.
Such DUNSTAN: — from its Benedictine coop
Issues the master Mind, at whose fell swoop
The chaste affections tremble to fulfil

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Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified
The might of spiritual sway! his thoughts, his dreams
Do in the supernatural world abide:
So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled with pride
In shows of virtue pushed to its extremes,
And sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX.

DANISH CONQUESTS.

Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey[12]!
Dissension checks the arms that would restrain
The incessant Rovers of the Northern Main,
And widely spreads once more a Pagan sway;
But Gospel-Truth is potent to allay
Fierceness and rage; and soon the cruel Dane
Feels, thro' the influence of her gentle reign,
His native superstitions melt away.
Thus, often, when thick gloom the east o'ershrouds,
The full-orbed Moon, slow-climbing, doth appear
Silently to consume the heavy clouds;
How no one can resolve; but every eye
Around her sees, while air is hushed, a clear
And widening circuit of etherial sky.

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XXX.

CANUTE.

A pleasant music floats along the Mere,
From Monks in Ely chaunting service high,
Whileas Canùte the King is rowing by:
"My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King, "draw near,
"That we the sweet song of the Monks may hear!"
He listen'd (all past conquests and all schemes
Of future vanishing like empty dreams)
Heart-touch'd, and haply not without a tear.
The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir was still,
While his free Barge skims the smooth flood along,
Gives to that rapture a memorial Rhyme. *
O suffering Earth! be thankful; sternest clime
And rudest age are subject to the thrill
Of heaven-descended Piety and Song.

XXXI.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares
The evanescence of the Saxon line.
Hark! 'tis the Curfew's knell! the stars may shine;
But of the lights that cherish household cares
And festive gladness, burns not one that dares
To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,

* Which is still extant.

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Emblem and instrument, from Thames to Tyne,
Of force that daunts, and cunning that ensnares!
Yet, as the terrors of the lordly bell,
That quench from hut to palace lamps and fires,
Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires,
Even so a thraldom studious to expel
Old laws, and ancient customs to derange,
Brings to Religion no injurious change.

XXXII.

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT.

"And shall," the Pontiff asks, "profaneness flow
"From Nazareth — source of Christian Piety,
"From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of Agony
"And glorified Ascension. Warriors go,
"With prayers and blessings we your path will sow;
"Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye
"Have chased far off by righteous victory
"These sons of Amalec, or laid them low!"
"God willeth it," the whole assembly cry;
Shout which the enraptured multitude astounded.
The Council-roof and Clermont's towers reply:
"God willeth it," from hill to hill rebounded;
Sacred resolve, in countries far and nigh,
Through "Nature's hollow arch," that night, resounded! *

* The decision of this council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

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XXXIII.

CRUSADES.

The Turban'd Race are poured in thickening swarms
Along the West; though driven from Aquitaine,
The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain;
And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;
The scimitar, that yields not to the charms
Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will disdain;
Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian hills detain
Their tents, and check the current of their arms.
Then blame not those who, by the mightiest lever
Known to the moral world, Imagination,
Upheave (so seems it) from her natural station
All Christendom: — they sweep along — (was never
So huge a host!) to tear from the Unbeliever
The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

XXXIV.

RICHARD I.

Redoubted King, of courage leonine,
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip
Thy warlike person with the staff and scrip;
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine;
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decline
Her blushing cheek, Love's vow upon her lip,
And see love-emblems streaming from thy ship,

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As thence she holds her way to Palestine.
My Song (a fearless Homager) would attend
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the press
Of war, but duty summons her away
To tell, how finding in the rash distress
Of those enthusiast powers a constant Friend,
Through giddier heights hath clomb the Papal sway.

XXXV.

AN INTERDICT.

Realms quake by turns: proud Arbitress of grace,
The Church, by mandate shadowing forth the power
She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,
Closes the gates of every sacred place; —
Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace
All sacred things are covered: cheerful morn
Grows sad as night — no seemly garb is worn,
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smile of greeting. — Bells are dumb;
Ditches are graves — funereal rites denied;
And in the Church-yard he must take his Bride
Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly come
Into the pensive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

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XXXVI.

PAPAL ABUSES.

As with the stream our voyage we pursue
The gross materials of this world present
A marvellous study of wild accident;
Uncouth proximities of old and new;
And bold transfigurations, more untrue
(As might be deemed) to disciplined intent
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,
When most fantastic, offers to the view.
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine?
Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia — crown,
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down
At a proud Legate's feet! The spears that line
Baronial Halls, the opprobrious insult feel;
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVII.

SCENE IN VENICE.

Black Demons hovering o'er his mitred head,
To Cæsar's Successor the Pontiff spake;
"Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy neck
"Levelled with Earth this foot of mine may tread."
Then, he who to the Altar had been led,
He, whose strong arm the Orient could not check,

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He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,
And even the common dignity of man!
Amazement strikes the crowd; — while many turn
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
From outraged Nature; but the sense of most
In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXVIII.

PAPAL DOMINION.

Unless to Peter's Chair the viewless wind
Must come and ask permission when to blow,
What further empire would it have? for now
A ghostly Domination, unconfined
As that by dreaming Bards to Love assigned,
Sits there in sober truth — to raise the low —
Perplex the wise — the strong to overthrow —
Through earth and heaven to bind and to unbind!
Resist — the thunder quails thee! crouch — rebuff
Shall be thy recompence! from land to land
The ancient thrones of Christendom are stuff
For occupation of a magic wand,
And 'tis the Pope that wields it, — whether rough
Or smooth his front, our world is in his hand!

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ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

PART SECOND.

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

I.

CISTERTIAN MONASTERY.

" *Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall*[1],
" *More promptly rises, walks with nicer heed,*
" *More safely rests, dies happier, is freed*
" *Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal*
" *A brighter crown.*" —— On yon Cistertian wall
That confident assurance may be read ;
And, to like shelter, from the world have fled
Encreasing multitudes. The potent call
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's desire ;
Yet, while the rugged age on pliant knee
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,
A gentler life spreads round the holy spires ;
Where'er they rise the sylvan waste retires,
And aëry harvests crown the fertile lea.

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II.

MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN.

Record we too, with just and faithful pen,
That many hooded Cenobites there are,
Who in their private Cells have yet a care
Of public quiet; unambitious Men,
Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;
Whose fervent exhortations from afar
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;
And oft-times in the most forbidding den
Of solitude, with love of science strong,
How patiently the yoke of thought they bear!
How subtly glide its finest threads along!
Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere
With mazy boundaries, as the Astronomer
With orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

III.

OTHER BENEFITS.

And not in vain embodied to the sight
Religion finds even in the stern Retreat
Of feudal Sway her own appropriate Seat;
From the Collegiate pomps on Windsor's height,
Down to the humble Altar, which the Knight
And his Retainers of the embattled hall
Seek in domestic oratory small,

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For prayer in stillness, or the chaunted rite;
Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted round,
Who teach the intrepid guardians of the place,
Hourly exposed to death, with famine worn,
And suffering under many a doubtful wound,
How sad would be their durance, if forlorn
Of offices dispensing heavenly grace!

IV.

CONTINUED.

And what melodious sounds at times prevail!
And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam
Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream!
What heartfelt fragrance mingles with the gale
That swells the bosom of our passing sail!
For where, but on *this* River's margin, blow
Those flowers of Chivalry, to bind the brow
Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not fail?
Fair Court of Edward! wonder of the world!
I see a matchless blazonry unfurled
Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love;
And meekness tempering honourable pride;
The Lamb is couching by the Lion's side,
And near the flame-eyed Eagle sits the Dove.

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V.

CRUSADERS.

Nor can Imagination quit the shores
Of these bright scenes without a farewell glance
Given to those dream-like Issues — that Romance
Of many-coloured life which Fortune pours
Round the Crusaders, till on distant shores
Their labours end; or they return to lie,
The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,
Devoutly stretched upon their chancel floors.
Am I deceived? Or is their requiem chaunted
By voices never mute when Heaven unties
Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies;
Requiem which Earth takes up with voice undaunted,
When she would tell how Good, and Brave, and Wise,
For their high guerdon not in vain have panted!

VI.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Enough! for see, with dim association
The tapers burn; the odorous incense feeds
A greedy flame; the pompous mass proceeds;
The Priest bestows the appointed consecration;
And, while the Host is raised, its elevation
An awe and supernatural horror breeds,
And all the People bow their heads like reeds,

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To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.
This Valdo brook'd not. On the banks of Rhone
He taught, till persecution chased him thence,
To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.
Nor were his Followers loth to seek defence,
'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy throne,
From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

VII.

WALDENSES.

These who gave earliest notice, as the Lark
Springs from the ground the morn to gratulate;
Who rather rose the day to antedate,
By striking out a solitary spark,
When all the world with midnight gloom was dark —
These Harbingers of good, whom bitter hate
In vain endeavoured to exterminate,
Fell Obloquy pursues with hideous bark! [2]
Meanwhile the unextinguishable fire,
Rekindled thus, from dens and savage woods
Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,
Through Courts, through Camps, o'er limitary Floods;
Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share
Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

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VIII.

ARCHBISHOP CHICHELEY TO HENRY V.

"What Beast in wilderness or cultivated field
"The lively beauty of the Leopard shews?
"What Flower in meadow-ground or garden grows
"That to the towering Lily doth not yield?
"Let both meet only on thy royal shield!
"Go forth, great King! claim what thy birth bestows;
"Conquer the Gallic Lily which thy foes
"Dare to usurp; — thou hast a sword to wield,
"And Heaven will crown the right." — The mitred Sire
Thus spake — and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul addressed,
Ploughs her bold course across the wondering seas;
For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast
Of youthful Heroes, is no sullen fire,
But one that leaps to meet the fanning breeze.

IX.

WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER.

Thus is the storm abated by the craft
Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect
The Church, whose power hath recently been check'd,
Whose monstrous riches threatened. So the shaft
Of victory mounts high and blood is quaff'd
In fields that rival Cressy and Poictiers.

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But mark the dire effect in coming years!
Deep, deep as hell itself, the future draught
Of civil slaughter. Yet, while Temporal power
Is by these shocks exhausted, Spiritual truth
Maintains the else endangered gift of life;
Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;
And, under cover of that woeful strife,
Gathers unblighted strength from hour to hour.

X.

WICLIFFE.

Once more the Church is seized with sudden fear,
And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:
Yea his dry bones to ashes are consumed,
And flung into the brook that travels near;
Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams can hear
Thus speaks, (that voice which walks upon the wind,
Though seldom heard by busy human kind,)
"As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt bear
"Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
"Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
"Into main Ocean they, this Deed accurst
"An emblem yields to friends and enemies
"How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanctified
"By Truth, shall spread throughout the world dispersed."

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XI.

CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY.

" Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease
" And cumbrous wealth — the shame of your estate;
" You on whose progress dazzling trains await
" Of pompous horses; whom vain titles please,
" Who will be served by others on their knees,
" Yet will yourselves to God no service pay;
" Pastors who neither take nor point the way
" To Heaven; for either lost in vanities
" Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know
" And speak the word ——" Alas! of fearful things
'Tis the most fearful when the People's eye
Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;
And taught the general voice to prophesy
Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

XII.

ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER.

And what is Penance with her knotted thong,
Mortification with the shirt of hair,
Wan cheek, and knees indurated with prayer,
Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long,
If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong
The pious, humble, useful Secular,
And robs the people of his daily care

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Scorning their wants because her arm is strong?
Inversion strange! that to a Monk, who lives
For self, and struggles with himself alone,
The amplest share of heavenly favour gives;
And hath allotted, in the world's esteem,
To such a higher station than to him
Who on the good of others builds his own.

XIII.

MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS.

Yet more,—round many a Convent's blazing fire
Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;
There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—
While Bacchus clothed in semblance of a Friar,
Pours out his choicest beverage high and higher
Sparkling, until it cannot chuse but run
Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won
An instant kiss of masterful desire—
To stay the precious waste. In every brain
Spreads the dominion of the sprightly juice,
Through the wide world to madding Fancy dear,
'Till the arch'd roof, with resolute abuse
Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,
Whose votive burthen is—"Our kingdom's here!"

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XIV.

DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES.

Threats come which no submission may assuage,
No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;
The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries mute,
And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish rage,
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;
The gadding bramble hangs her purple fruit;
And the green lizard and the gilded newt
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.[3]
The Owl of evening, and the woodland Fox
For their abode the shrines of Waltham chuse:
Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse
To stoop her head before these desperate shocks —
She whose high pomp displaced, as story tells,
Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

XV.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

The lovely Nun (submissive but more meek
Through saintly habit, than from effort due
To unrelenting mandates that pursue
With equal wrath the steps of strong and weak)
Goes forth — unveiling timidly her cheek
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,
While through the Convent gate to open view

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Softly she glides, another home to seek.
Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,
An Apparition more divinely bright!
Not more attractive to the dazzled sight
Those wat'ry glories, on the stormy brine
Pour'd forth, while summer suns at distance shine,
And the green vales lie hush'd in sober light!

XVI.

CONTINUED.

Yet some, Noviciates of the cloistral shade,
Or chained by vows, with undissembled glee
The warrant hail — exulting to be free;
Like ships before whose keels, full long embayed
In polar ice, propitious winds have made
Unlook'd-for outlet to an open sea,
Their liquid world, for bold discovery,
In all her quarters temptingly displayed!
Hope guides the young; but when the old must pass
The threshold, whither shall they turn to find
The hospitality — the alms (alas!
Alms may be needed) which that House bestowed?
Can they, in faith and worship, train the mind
To keep this new and questionable road?

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XVII.

SAINTS.

Ye, too, must fly before a chasing hand,
Angels and Saints, in every hamlet mourned!
Ah! if the old idolatry be spurned,
Let not your radiant Shapes desert the Land:
Her adoration was not your demand,
The fond heart proffered it — the servile heart;
And therefore are ye suffered to depart,
Michael, and thou St. George whose flaming brand
The Dragon quelled; and valiant Margaret
Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:
And rapt Cecilia seraph-haunted Queen
Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,
Who in the penitential desert met
Gales sweet as those that over Eden blew.

XVIII.

THE VIRGIN.

Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central Ocean tost;

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Brighter than eastern skies at day-break strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

XIX.

APOLOGY.

Not utterly unworthy to endure
Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;
Age after age to the arch of Christendom
Aërial keystone haughtily secure;
Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure
As many hold; and, therefore, to the tomb
Pass some through fire — and by the scaffold some
Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.
"Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit
"Upon his throne;" unsoftened, undismayed
By aught that mingled with the tragic scene
Of pity or fear; and More's gay genius played
With the inoffensive sword of native wit,
Than the bare axe more luminous and keen.

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XX.

IMAGINATIVE REGRETS.

Deep is the lamentation! Not alone
From sages justly honoured by mankind,
But from the ghostly Tenants of the wind,
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan
Issues for that dominion overthrown:
Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges blind
As his own worshippers; — and Nile, reclined
Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan
Renews. — Through every forest, cave, and den,
Where frauds were hatch'd of old, hath sorrow past —
Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native Waste
Where once his airy helpers schemed and planned,
'Mid phantom lakes bemocking thirsty men,
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

XXI.

REFLECTIONS.

Grant, that by this unsparing Hurricane
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn away,
And goodly fruitage with the mother spray,
'Twere madness — wished we, therefore, to detain,
With farewell sighs of mollified disdain,
The "trumpery" that ascends in bare display, —
Bulls, pardons, relics, cowls, black, white, and grey,

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Upwhirl'd — and flying o'er the ethereal plain
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. — And yet not choice
But habit rules the unreflecting herd,
And airy bonds are hardest to disown ;
Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty transferred
Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

XXII.

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

But to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,
In dusty sequestration wrapp'd too long,
Assumes the accents of our native tongue ;
And he who guides the plough, or wields the crook,
With understanding spirit now may look
Upon her records, listen to her song,
And sift her laws — much wondering that the wrong
Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could calmly brook.
Transcendant Boon ! noblest that earthly King
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness !
But passions spread like plagues, and thousands wild
With bigotry shall tread the Offering
Beneath their feet — detested and defiled.

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XXIII.

EDWARD VI.

"Sweet is the holiness of youth" — so felt
Time-honoured Chaucer when he framed the lay
By which the Prioress beguiled the way,
And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did melt.
Hadst thou, loved Bard! whose spirit often dwelt
In the clear land of vision, but foreseen
King, Child, and Seraph, blended in the mien
Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt
In meek and simple Infancy, what joy
For universal Christendom had thrilled
Thy heart! what hopes inspired thy genius, skilled
(O great Precursor, genuine morning star)
The lucid shafts of reason to employ,
Piercing the Papal darkness from afar!

XXIV.

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT.

The tears of man in various measure gush
From various sources; gently overflow
From blissful transport some — from clefts of woe
Some with ungovernable impulse rush;
And some, coëval with the earliest blush

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Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show
Their pearly lustre — coming but to go;
And some break forth when others' sorrows crush
The sympathizing heart. Nor these, nor yet
The noblest drops to admiration known,
To gratitude, to injuries forgiv'n,
Claim Heaven's regard like waters that have wet
The innocent eyes of youthful monarchs driven
To pen the mandates, nature doth disown.

XXV.

CRANMER.

Outstretching flame-ward his upbraiding hand
(O God of mercy may no earthly Seat
Of judgment such presumptuous doom repeat!)
Amid the shuddering throng doth Cranmer stand;
Firm as the stake to which with iron band
His Frame is tied; firm from the naked feet
To the bare head, the victory complete;
The shrouded Body, to the Soul's command,
Answering with more than Indian fortitude,
Through all her nerves with finer sense endued;
Now wrapt in flames, and now in smoke embowered —
'Till self-reproach and panting aspirations
Are, with the heart that held them, all devoured;
The Spirit set free, and crown'd with joyful acclamations!

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XXVI.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF THE REFORMATION.

Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light
Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust
(While we look round) that Heaven's decrees are just;
Which few can hold committed to a fight
That shews, even on its better side, the might
Of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,
'Mid clouds envelop'd of polemic dust,
Which showers of blood seem rather to incite
Than to allay. — Anathemas are hurled
From both sides; veteran thunders (the brute test
Of Truth) are met by fulminations new —
Tartarean flags are caught at and unfurled —
Friends strike at Friends — the flying shall pursue —
And Victory sickens, ignorant where to rest!

XXVII.

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE.

Scattering, like Birds escaped the Fowler's net,
Some seek with timely flight a foreign strand,
Most happy, re-assembled in a land
By dauntless Luther freed, could they forget
Their Country's woes. But scarcely have they met,
Partners in faith, and Brothers in distress,
Free to pour forth their common thankfulness,

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Ere hope declines; their union is beset
With prurient speculations rashly sown,
Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poisonous weeds;
Their forms are broken staves; their passions steeds
That master them. How enviably blest
Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone
The peace of God within his single breast!

XXVIII.

ELIZABETH.

Hail, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious bar
Triumphant! snatched from many a treacherous wile!
All hail, Sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle
Hath blest, respiring from that dismal war
Stilled by thy voice! But quickly from afar
Defiance breathes with more malignant aim;
And alien storms with home-bred ferments claim
Portentous fellowship. Her silver car
Meanwhile, by prudence ruled, glides slowly on;
Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint
Emerging pure, and seemingly more bright!
For, wheresoe'er she moves, the clouds anon
Disperse; or — under a Divine constraint —
Reflect some portion of her glorious light!

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XXIX.

EMINENT REFORMERS.

Methinks that I could trip o'er heaviest soil,
Light as a buoyant Bark from wave to wave,
Were mine the trusty Staff that Jewel gave
To youthful Hooker in familiar style
The gift exalting, and with playful smile[4]:
For, thus equipped, and bearing on his head
The Donor's farewell blessing, could he dread
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of toil?
More sweet than odours caught by him who sails
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gales
From fields where good men walk, or bowers wherein they rest.

XXX.

THE SAME.

Holy and heavenly Spirits as they were,
Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,
With what entire affection did they prize
Their new-born Church! labouring with earnest care
To baffle all that might her strength impair;
That Church — the unperverted Gospel's seat;

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In their afflictions a divine retreat;
Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest prayer!
The Truth exploring with an equal mind,
In polity and discipline they sought
Firmly between the two extremes to steer;
But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot,
To trace right courses for the stubborn blind,
And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

XXXI.

DISTRACTIONS.

Men, who have ceased to reverence, soon defy
Their Forefathers; — lo! Sects are formed, and split
With morbid restlessness — the ecstatic fit
Spreads wide; though special mysteries multiply,
The Saints must govern, is their common cry,
And so they labour; deeming Holy Writ
Disgraced by aught that seems content to sit
Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.
The Romanist exults; fresh hope he draws
From the confusion — craftily incites
The overweening — personates the mad[5] —
To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause:
The Throne is plagued; the New-born Church is sad,
For every wave against her peace unites.

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XXXII.

GUNPOWDER PLOT.

Fear hath a hundred eyes that all agree
To plague her beating heart; and there is one
(Nor idlest that!) which holds communion
With things that were not, yet were *meant* to be.
Aghast within its gloomy cavity
That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done
Crimes that might stop the motion of the sun)
Beholds the horrible catastrophe
Of an assembled Senate unredeemed
From subterraneous Treason's darkling power:
Merciless act of Sorrow infinite!
Worse than the product of that dismal night,
When gushing, copious as a thunder Shower,
The blood of Huguenots through Paris stream'd.

XXXIII.

ILLUSTRATION.

The * Virgin Mountain, wearing like a Queen
A brilliant Crown of everlasting Snow,
Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
Can link with desolation. Smooth and green,
And seeming, at a little distance, slow,

* The Jung-frau.

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The waters of the Rhine; but on they go
Fretting and whitening, keener and more keen,
Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils breathe
Blasts of tempestuous smoke — wherewith he tries
To hide himself but only magnifies;
And doth in more conspicuous torment writhe,
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

XXXIV.

TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST

Such contrast, in whatever track we move,
To the mind's eye Religion doth present;
Now with her own deep quietness content;
Then, like the mountain, thundering from above
Against the ancient Pine-trees of the grove
And the Land's humblest comforts. Now her mood
Recals the transformation of the flood,
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain reprove,
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess
Of headstrong will! Can this be Piety?
No — some fierce Maniac hath usurp'd her name;
And scourges England struggling to be free:
Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilderness!
Her blessings curs'd — her glory turn'd to shame!

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XXXV.

LAUD.

Pursued by Hate, debarred from friendly care;
An old weak Man for vengeance thrown aside,
Long "in the painful art of dying" tried,
(Like a poor Bird entangled in a Snare
Whose heart still flutters, though his wings forbear
To stir in useless struggle) Laud relied
Upon the strength which Innocence supplied,
And in his prison breathed celestial air.
Why tarries then thy Chariot? Wherefore stay,
O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,
Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey,
(What time a state with madding faction reels)
The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

XXXVI.

AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND.

Harp! couldst thou venture, on thy boldest string,
The faintest note to echo which the blast
Caught from the hand of Moses as it pass'd
O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd King
Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing
Of dread Jehovah; then, should wood and waste
Hear also of that name, and mercy cast

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Off to the mountains, like a covering
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, oh weep,
As good men wept beholding King and Priest
Despised by that stern God to whom they raise
Their suppliant hands ; but holy is the feast
He keepeth ; like the firmament his ways ;
His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

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ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

PART THIRD.

FROM THE RESTORATION, TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

I.

I saw the figure of a lovely Maid
Seated alone beneath a darksome Tree,
Whose fondly overhanging canopy
Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.
Substance she seem'd (and *that* my heart betrayed,
For she was one I loved exceedingly ;)
But while I gazed in tender reverie
(Or was it sleep that with my Fancy play'd ?)
The bright corporeal presence, form, and face,
Remaining still distinct, grew thin and rare,
Like sunny mist ; at length the golden hair,
Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keeping pace
Each with the other, in a lingering race
Of dissolution, melted into air.

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II.

PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES.

Last night, without a voice, this Vision spake
Fear to my Spirit — passion that might seem
To lie dissevered from our present theme ;
Yet do I love my Country — and partake
Of kindred agitations for her sake ;
She visits oftentimes my midnight dream ;
Her glory meets me with the earliest beam
Of light, which tells that morning is awake :
If aught impair her beauty or destroy,
Or but forebode destruction, I deplore
With filial love the sad vicissitude ;
If she hath fallen and righteous Heaven restore
The prostrate, then my spring-time is renewed,
And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

III.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

Who comes with rapture greeted, and caress'd
With frantic love — his kingdom to regain ?
Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain
Received, and fostered in her iron breast :
For all she taught of hardiest and of best,
Or would have taught, by discipline of pain
And long privation, now dissolves amain,

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Or is remembered only to give zest
To wantonness. — Away Circean revels!
Already stands our Country on the brink
Of bigot rage, that all distinction levels
Of truth and falsehood, swallowing the good name,
And, with that draught, the life-blood: misery, shame,
By Poets loathed; from which Historians shrink!

IV.

LATITUDINARIANISM.

Yet Truth is keenly sought for, and the wind
Charged with rich words poured out in Thought's defence;
Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic Piety — confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind;
And One there is who builds immortal lays,
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind!
Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel
Sad thoughts; for from above the starry sphere
Come secrets — whispered nightly to his ear;
And the pure spirit of celestial light
Shines through his soul — "that he may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight." —

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V.

WALTON'S BOOK OF "LIVES."

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky
So fair as these. The feather whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these good Men,
Dropped from an Angel's wing. With moistened eye
We read of faith and purest charity
In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen.
O, could we copy their mild virtues, then
What joy to live, what blessedness to die!
Methinks their very Names shine still and bright,
Apart — like glow-worms in the woods of spring,
Or lonely tapers shooting far a light
That guides and cheers, — or seen, like stars on high,
Satellites burning in a lucid ring
Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

VI.

CLERICAL INTEGRITY.

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject
Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous day
Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey
To poverty and grief, and disrespect,
And some to want — as if by tempest wreck'd
On a wild coast; how destitute! did They
Feel not that Conscience never can betray,

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That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect.
Their Altars they forego, their homes they quit,
Fields which they love, and paths they daily trod,
And cast the future upon Providence;
As men the dictate of whose inward sense
Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving wit
Lures not from what they deem the cause of God.

VII.

ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS.

A voice, from long-expectant thousands sent,
Shatters the air and troubles tower and spire—
For Justice hath absolved the Innocent,
And Tyranny is balked of her desire:
Up — down the busy Thames — rapid as fire
Coursing a train of gunpowder — it went,
And transport finds in every street a vent,
Till the whole City rings like one vast quire.
The Fathers urge the People to be still
With outstretched hands and earnest voice — in vain!
Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
Small reverence for the Mitre's offices,
And to Religion's self no friendly will,
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

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VIII.

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

Calm as an under current — strong to draw
Millions of waves into itself, and run,
From sea to sea, impervious to the sun
And ploughing storm — the spirit of Nassau
(By constant impulse of religious awe
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend
With the wide world's commotions) from its end
Swerves not — diverted by a casual law.
Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope?
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy;
And while he marches on with righteous hope,
Conqueror beloved! expected anxiously!
The vacillating Bondman of the Pope
Shrinks from the verdict of his steadfast eye.

IX.

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Ungrateful Country, if thou e'er forget
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled!
How, like a Roman, Sydney bowed his head,
And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet;
But These had fallen for profitless regret
Had not thy holy Church her Champions bred,

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And claims from other worlds inspirited
The Star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet
(Grave this within thy heart!) if spiritual things
Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,
However hardly won or justly dear;
What came from Heaven to Heaven by nature clings,
And if dissevered thence its course is short.

X.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

As star that shines dependant upon star
Is to the sky while we look up in love;
As to the deep fair ships which though they move
Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from afar;
As to the sandy desart fountains are,
With palm groves shaded at wide intervals,
Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native falls
Of roving tired or desultory war;
Such to this British Isle her Christian Fanes
Each linked to each for kindred services;
Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glittering vanes
Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among trees,
Where a few villagers on bended knees
Find solace which a busy world disdains.

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XI.

PASTORAL CHARACTER.

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat Mansion[1], where, his Flock among,
The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful Lord.
Though meek and patient as a sheathèd sword,
Though pride's least lurking thought appear a wrong
To human kind; though peace be on his tongue,
Gentleness in his heart; can earth afford
Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,
As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,
He from the Pulpit lifts his awful hand;
Conjures, implores, and labours all he can
For re-subjecting to divine command
The stubborn spirit of rebellious Man?

XII.

THE LITURGY.

YES, if the intensities of hope and fear
Attract us still, and passionate exercise
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
Distinct with signs — through which, in fixed career,
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year
Of England's Church — stupendous mysteries!

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Which whoso travels in her bosom, eyes
As he approaches them, with solemn cheer.
Enough for us to cast a transient glance
The circle through; relinquishing its story
For those whom Heaven hath fitted to advance
And, harp in hand, rehearse the King of Glory—
From his mild advent till his countenance
Shall dissipate the seas and mountains hoary.

XIII.

CATECHIZING.

From little down to least—in due degree,
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,
Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!
With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears betrayed;
And some a bold unerring answer made:
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,
Beloved Mother! Thou whose happy hand
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie:
Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible command
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-appear,
O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heart-felt sigh!

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XIV.

RURAL CEREMONY.[2]

With smiles each happy face was overspread,
That trial ended. Give we to a day
Of festal joy one tributary lay;
That day when forth by rustic music led
The village Children, while the sky is red
With evening lights, advance in long array
Through the still Church-yard, each with garland gay,
That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the head
Of the proud Bearer. To the wide Church-door,
Charged with these offerings which their Fathers bore
For decoration in the Papal time,
The innocent procession softly moves: —
The spirit of Laud is pleased in Heav'n's pure clime
And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves!

XV.

REGRETS.

Would that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave
Less scanty measure of those graceful rites
And usages, whose due return invites
A stir of mind too natural to deceive;
Giving the Memory help when she would weave
A crown for Hope! I dread the boasted lights

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That all too often are but fiery blights,
Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.
Go, seek when Christmas snows discomfort bring
The counter spirit, found in some gay Church
Green with fresh Holly, every pew a perch
In which the linnet or the thrush might sing,
Merry and loud, and safe from prying search,
Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XVI.

MUTABILITY.

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sinks from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, that royally did wear
Its crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

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XVII.

OLD ABBIES.

Monastic Domes! following my downward way,
Untouched by due regret I mark your fall!
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all
Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay
On our past selves in life's declining day:
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,
We learn to tolerate the infirmities
And faults of others, gently as he may
Towards our own the mild Instructor deals,
Teaching us to forget them or forgive.[3]
Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill
Why should we break Time's charitable seals?
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still;
Your spirit freely let me drink and live!

XVIII.

CONGRATULATION.

Thus all things lead to Charity — secured
By Them who bless'd the soft and happy gale
That landward urged the great Deliverer's sail,
Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored!
Propitious hour! had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension[4], with a mind
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse designed,

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From month to month trembling and unassured,
How had we then rejoiced! But we have felt,
As a loved substance, their futurity;
Good, which they dared not hope for, we have seen;
A State whose generous will through earth is dealt;
A State, which balancing herself between
Licence and slavish order, dares be free.

XIX.

NEW CHURCHES.

But liberty, and triumphs on the Main,
And laurelled Armies — not to be withstood,
What serve they? if, on transitory good
Intent, and sedulous of abject gain,
The State (ah surely not preserved in vain!)
Forbear to shape due channels which the Flood
Of sacred Truth may enter — till it brood
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian Plain
The all-sustaining Nile. No more — the time
Is conscious of her want; through England's bounds,
In rival haste, the wished-for Temples rise!
I hear their Sabbath bell's harmonious chime
Float on the breeze — the heavenliest of all sounds
That hill or vale prolongs or multiplies!

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XX.

CHURCH TO BE ERECTED.

Be this the chosen site — the virgin sod
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,
Shall disappear — and grateful earth receive
The corner-stone from hands that build to God.
Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to the rod
Of Winter storms yet budding cheerfully;
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid this band
Of daisies, Shepherds sate of yore and wove
May-garlands, let the holy Altar stand
For kneeling adoration; while above,
Broods, visibly pourtrayed, the mystic Dove,
That shall protect from Blasphemy the Land.

XXI.

CONTINUED.

Mine ear has rung, my spirits sunk subdued,
Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,
When each pale brow to dread hosannas bowed
While clouds of incense mounting veiled the rood,
That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly viewed
Through Alpine vapours. Such appalling rite
Our Church prepares not, trusting to the might

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Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;
Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like men ashamed[5]: the Sun with his first smile
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low pile;
And the fresh air of "incense-breathing morn"
Shall wooingly embrace it; and green moss
Creep round its arms through centuries unborn.

XXII.

NEW CHURCH-YARD.

The encircling ground, in native turf array'd,
Is now by solemn consecration given
To social interests, and to favouring Heaven;
And where the rugged Colts their gambols play'd,
And wild Deer bounded through the forest glade,
Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,
Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and even;
And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's spade
Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture small,
But infinite its grasp of joy and woe!
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and flow —
The spousal trembling — and the "dust to dust" —
The prayers — the contrite struggle — and the trust
That to the Almighty Father looks through all!

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XXIII.

CATHEDRALS, &c.

Open your Gates, ye everlasting Piles!
Types of the spiritual Church which God hath reared;
Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed sward
And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous aisles
To kneel — or thrid your intricate defiles —
Or down the nave to pace in motion slow,
Watching, with upward eyes, the tall tower grow
And mount, at every step, with living wiles
Instinct — to rouse the heart and lead the will
By a bright ladder to the world above.
Open your Gates, ye Monuments of love
Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign hill!
Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose splendors cheer
Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

XXIV.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expence,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned,
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only, this immense
And glorious Work of fine Intelligence!
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more:

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So deemed the Man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars — spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering — and wandering on as loth to die,
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

XXV.

THE SAME.

What awful pèrspective! while from our sight
Their portraiture the lateral windows hide,
Glimmers their corresponding stone-work, dyed
With the soft chequering of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite,
Whoe'er ye be, that thus — yourselves unseen —
Imbue your poison-bars with solemn sheen,
Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night!
But, from the arms of silence — list! O list!
The music bursteth into second life —
The notes luxuriate — every stone is kiss'd
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast before the eye
Of the Devout a veil of ecstacy!

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XXVI.

CONTINUED.

They dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold; where the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my path
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
Infinity's embrace; whose guardian crest,
The silent cross, among the stars shall spread
As now, when she hath *also* seen her breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

XXVII.

EJACULATION.

Glory to God! and to the Power who came
In filial duty, clothed with love divine;
That made his human tabernacle shine
Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame;
Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues[6], far kenn'd at morn and even,
In hours of peace, or when the storm is driven

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Along the nether region's rugged frame!
Earth prompts—Heaven urges; let us seek the light
Studious of that pure intercourse begun
When first our infant brows their lustre won;
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more bright
From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,
At the approach of all-involving night.

XXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,
Coil within coil, at noontide? For the Word
Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith explored,
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall unfold
His drowsy rings. Look forth! that Stream behold,
That Stream upon whose bosom we have pass'd
Floating at ease while nations have effaced
Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold
Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth, my Soul!
(Nor in that vision be thou slow to trust)
The living Waters, less and less by guilt
Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,
Till they have reached the Eternal City—built
For the perfected Spirits of the just!

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Ecclesiastical Sonnets

NOTES TO PART I.

NOTE 1. Page 236.

Did holy Paul.

STILLINGFLEET adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this sonnet alludes to a favourite notion of Catholic Writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his Companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude Church at Glastonbury alluded to hereafter in the passage upon the dissolution of Monasteries.

NOTE 2. Page 239.

That Hill, whose flowery platform, &c.

THIS hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it with a delicate feeling delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works: "Variis herbarum floribus depictus, immò usquequaque, vestitus in quo nihil repentè arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longè latèque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum, pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis, jam olim reddens qui beati Martyris cruore dicaretur."

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NOTE 3. Page 242.

Nor wants the cause the panic-sticking aid
Of hallelujahs.

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus. — See Bede.

NOTE 4. Page 242.

Who feel no care
For other monuments than those of Earth.

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state, (though to the readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary,) that my obligations to other Prose Writers are frequent,— obligations, which even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularize Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wicliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that Event in the Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

NOTE 5. Page 243.

Monastery of Old Bangor.

"Ethelforth reached the Convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their Countrymen: 'If they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us;' and he ordered

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them to be first attacked: they were destroyed, and appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish, were all that remained of the magnificent edifice." — See Turner's valuable History of the Anglo-Saxons.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event, suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices.

NOTE 6. Page 245.

Paulinus.

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness: "Longæ staturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."

NOTE 7. Page 245.

Man's life is like a Sparrow.

See the original of this speech in Bede. — The Conversion of Edwin as related by him is highly interesting — and the breaking up of this Council accompa-

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nied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. "Who," exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, "shall first desecrate the Altars and the Temples?" "I," answered the Chief Priest, "for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness I worshipped." Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him, what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser; which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad,—he, however, halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the Temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in the acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the Temple, with all its inclosures. The place is shewn where those Idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham."

NOTE 8. Page 246.

Such the inviting voice
Heard near fresh streams.

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers for the convenience of baptism.

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NOTE 9. Page 247.

Primitive Saxon Clergy.

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds: "Unde et in magnâ erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus; ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inveniretur, accurrebant, et, flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedici, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum præbebant." Lib. iii. chap. 26.

NOTE 10. Page 251.

The people work like congregated bees.

See in Turner's History, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performances of acts of charity and benevolence.

NOTE 11. Page 252.

Pain narrows not his cares.

Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

NOTE 12. Page 254.

Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!

The violent measures carried on under the influence of *Dunstan*, for strengthening the Benedictine

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Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish Invasions. *See Turner.*

PART II.

Note 1. Page 261.

Here Man more purely lives, &c.

"Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius." Bernard. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed on some conspicuous part of the Cistertian houses."

Note 2. Page 265.

Fell Obloquy pursues with hideous bark.

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious; — and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians or Paturins, from *pati*, to suffer.

Dwellers with wolves she names them, for the Pine
And green Oak are their covert; as the gloom
Of night oft foils their Enemy's design,
She calls them Riders on the flying broom;
Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become
One and the same through practices malign.

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NOTE 3. Page 270.

And the green lizard and the gilded newt
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.

These two lines are adopted from a MS. written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source as is the verse, " Where Venus sits," &c.

NOTE 4. Page 280.

The gift exalting, and with playful smile.

" On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel, and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a Servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten

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groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her, I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more, to carry you on foot to the college; and so, God bless you, good Richard.'"

See Walton's Life of Richard Hooker.

NOTE 5. Page 281.

Craftily incites
The overweening — personates the mad.

A common device in religious and political conflicts.

See Strype in support of this instance.

PART III.

NOTE 1, Page 294.

A genial hearth, —
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat Mansion.

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church Establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the Country to which it belongs, may be reckoned, as eminently important, the examples of civility and refinement which the Clergy, stationed at intervals, afford to the whole people. The established Clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link

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which unites the sequestered Peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe that their Taste, as acting upon rural Residences and scenery, often furnishes models which Country Gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of Fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by Ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of Garden and Architecture, which, if the Place had belonged to a wealthy Layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A Parsonage-house generally stands not far from the Church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegancies of life, with the outward signs of piety and mortality. With pleasure I recall to mind a happy instance of this in the Residence of an old and much-valued Friend in Oxfordshire. The House and Church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn, or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the Dwelling, veiling, but not hiding the Church. From the front of this Dwelling, no part of the Burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the Shrubs toward the Steeple end of the Church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental head-stone, moss-grown, sinking into, and gently inclining towards, the earth. Advance, and

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the Church-yard, populous and gay with glittering Tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble, and beautiful Parsonage called forth a tribute which will not be out of its place here.

Where holy ground begins — unhallowed ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line ;
The turf unites — the pathways intertwine ;
And wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
Garden, and that Domain where Kindred, Friends,
And Neighbours rest together, here confound
Their several features — mingled like the sound
Of many waters, or as evening blends
With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave ;
Meanwhile between those Poplars, as they wave
Their lofty summits, comes and goes a sky
Bright as the glimpses of Eternity,
To Saints accorded in their mortal hour.

NOTE 2. Page 296.

Rural Ceremony.

This is still continued in many Churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July when the floor of the Stalls is strewn with fresh rushes : and hence it is called the " Rush-bearing."

NOTE 3. Page 298.

Teaching us to forget them or forgive.

THIS is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's History of Cambridge.

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NOTE 4. Page 298.

Had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension.

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject ; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the " Protestant wind."

NOTE 5. Page 301.

Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like Men ashamed.

THE Lutherans have retained the Cross within their Churches ; it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.

NOTE 6. Page 304.

Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues, &c.

SOME say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit — a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.

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MEMORIALS

OF A

TOUR ON THE CONTINENT,

1820.

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DEDICATION.

Dear Fellow-Travellers! think not that the Muse
Presents to notice these memorial Lays,
Hoping the general eye thereon will gaze,
As on a mirror that gives back the hues
Of living Nature; no — though free to chuse
The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,
The fairest landscapes and the brightest days,
She felt too deeply what her skill must lose.
For You she wrought; — ye only can supply
The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides
In that enjoyment which with you abides,
Trusts to your love and vivid memory;
Thus far contented that for You her verse
Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce!"

W. WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount,
January, 1822.

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MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT.

SONNET.

FISH-WOMEN. — ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

'Tis said, fantastic Ocean doth enfold
The likeness of whate'er on Land is seen;
But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,
Above whose heads the Tide so long hath roll'd,
The Dames resemble whom we here behold,
How terrible beneath the opening waves
To sink, and meet them in their fretted caves,
Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,
And shrill and fierce in accent! — Fear it not;
For they Earth's fairest Daughters do excel;
Pure unmolested beauty is their lot;
Their voices into liquid music swell,
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot —
The undisturbed Abodes where Sea-nymphs dwell!

SONNET.

BRUGES.[1]

Bruges I saw attired with golden light
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe of power:
'Tis passed away; — and now the sunless hour,

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That slowly introducing peaceful night
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight
Offers her beauty, her magnificence,
And all the graces left her for defence
Against the injuries of time, the spite
Of Fortune, and the desolating storms
Of future War. Advance not — spare to hide,
O gentle Power of Darkness! these mild hues;
Obscure not yet these silent avenues
Of stateliest Architecture, where the forms
Of Nun-like Females, with soft motion, glide!

SONNET.

BRUGES.[1]

The Spirit of Antiquity, enshrined
In sumptuous Buildings, vocal in sweet Song
And Tales transmitted through the popular tongue,
And with devout solemnities entwined,
Strikes at the seat of grace within the mind:
Hence Forms that slide with swan-like ease along;
Hencemotions, even amid the vulgar throng,
To an harmonious decency confined:
As if the Streets were consecrated ground,
The Cityone vast Temple — dedicate
To mutual respect in thought and deed;
To leisure, to forbearances sedate;
To social cares from jarring passions freed;
A nobler peace than that in desarts found!

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SONNET.

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

A WINGED Goddess, clothed in vesture wrought
Of rainbow colours; One whose port was bold,
Whose overburthened hand could scarcely hold
The glittering crowns and garlands which it brought,
Hover'd in air above the far-famed Spot.
She vanished — All was joyless, blank, and cold;
But if from wind-swept fields of corn that roll'd
In dreary billows, from the meagre cot,
And monuments that may soon disappear,
Meanings we craved which could not there be found;
If the wide prospect seemed an envious seal
Of great exploits; we felt as Men *should* feel,
With such vast hoards of hidden carnage near,
And horror breathing from the silent ground!

SONNET.

SCENERY BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy chuse?
Is this the Stream, whose cities, heights, and plains,
War's favorite play-ground, are with crimson stains
Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dews?
The Morn, that now along the silver MEUSE
Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the Swains
To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,

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Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrews
The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes
Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,
How sweet the prospect of yon watery glade,
With its grey rocks, clustering in pensive shade,
That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise
From the smooth meadow-ground, serene and still.

SONNET.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

Was it to disenchant, and to undo,
That we approached the Seat of Charlemaine?
To sweep from many an old romantic strain
That faith which no devotion may renew!
Why does this puny Church present to view
Its feeble columns? and that scanty Chair!
This Sword that One of our weak times might wear;
Objects of false pretence, or meanly true!
If from a Traveller's fortune I might claim
A palpable memorial of that day,
Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach *

* "Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms — let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent with its convexity towards France. Lastly let us suppose that in the very middle of the wall a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous *Roland*, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'Breche de Roland.'"

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Which ROLAND clove with huge two-handed sway,
And to the enormous labor left his name,
Where unremitting frosts the rocky Crescent bleach.

SONNET.

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE.

O FOR the help of Angels to complete
This Temple — Angels governed by a Plan
How gloriously pursued by daring Man,
Studious that HE might not disdain the Seat
Who dwells in Heaven! But that inspiring heat
Hath failed; and now, ye Powers! whose gorgeous wings
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet
For you, on these unfinished Shafts to try
The midnight virtues of your harmony: —
This vast Design might tempt you to repeat
Charms that call forth upon empyreal ground
Immortal Fabrics — rising to the sound
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet!

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SONNET.

AUTHOR'S VOYAGE DOWN THE RHINE (THIRTY YEARS AGO.)

The confidence of Youth our only Art,
And Hope gay Pilot of the bold design,
We saw the living Landscapes of the Rhine,
Reach after reach, salute us and depart;
Slow sink the spires, — and up again they start!
But who shall count the Towers as they recline
O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon line
Striding, with shattered crests, the eye athwart?
More touching still, more perfect was the pleasure,
When hurrying forward till the slack'ning stream
Spread like a spacious Mere, we there could measure
A smooth free course along the watery gleam,
Think calmly on the past, and mark at leisure
Features which else had vanished like a dream.

SONNET.

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE.

Amid this dance of objects sadness steals
O'er the defrauded heart — while sweeping by,
As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels:
Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels

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The venerable pageantry of Time,
Each beetling rampart — and each Tower sublime,
And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees espied
Near the bright River's edge. Yet why repine?
Pedestrian liberty shall yet be mine
To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze:
Freedom which youth with copious hand supplied,
May in fit measure bless my later days.

HYMN,

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH THE RAPIDS, UNDER THE CASTLE OF HEIDELBERG.

JESU! bless our slender Boat
By the current swept along;
Loud its threatenings — let them not
Drown the music of a Song
Breathed thy mercy to implore,
Where these troubled waters roar!

Lord and Saviour! who art seen
Bleeding on that precious Rood;
If, while through the meadows green
Gently wound the peaceful flood,
We forgot Thee, do not Thou
Disregard thy Suppliants now!

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Hither, like yon ancient Tower
 Watching o'er the River's bed,
Fling the shadow of thy power,
 Else we sleep among the Dead;
Traveller on the billowy Sea,
Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;
 Through the rocks our passage smooth;
Where the whirlpool frets and raves
 Let thy love its anger soothe;
All our hope is placed in Thee;
Miserere Domine!

SONNET.

LOCAL RECOLLECTION ON THE HEIGHTS NEAR HOCKHEIM.[3]

Abruptly paused the Strife;—the field throughout
Resting upon his arms each Warrior stood,
Checked in the very act and deed of blood,
With breath suspended—like a listening Scout.
O Silence! thou wert Mother of a shout
That thro' the texture of yon azure dome
Clove its glad way—a cry of harvest home
Uttered to Heaven in ecstacy devout!
The barrier Rhine hath flashed, thro' battle-smoke,
On men who gazed heart-smitten by the view,

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As if all Germany had felt the shock.
Fly, wretched Gauls! ere they the charge renew
Who have seen (themselves delivered from the yoke)
The unconquerable Stream his course pursue.

SONNET.

THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE.[4]

Not (like his great compeers) indignantly
Doth Danube spring to life! The wandering stream
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's gleam
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy, free
To follow in his track of silver light,
Reaches, with one brief moment's rapid flight,
The vast Encincture of that gloomy sea
Whose rough winds Orpheus soothed; whose waves did greet
So skilfully that they forgot their jars —
To waft the heroic progeny of Greece,
When the first Ship sailed for the golden Fleece;
Argo exalted by that daring feat
To a conspicuous height among the stars!

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MEMORIAL,

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN.

"DEM
ANDENKEN
MEINES FREUNDES
ALOYS REDING
MDCCCXVIII."

Around a wild and woody hill
A gravelled path-way treading,
We reached a votive Stone that bears
The name of Aloys Reding.[5]

Well judged the Friend who placed it there
For silence and protection,
And haply with a finer care
Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West,
Sinking in summer glory;
And, while he sinks, affords a type
Of that pathetic story.

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
Amid the grove to linger;
Till all is dim, save this bright Stone
Touched by his golden finger.

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SONNET.

ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH,[6] LAUTERBRUNNEN.

Tracks let me follow far from human-kind
Which these illusive greetings may not reach;
Where only Nature tunes her voice to teach
Careless pursuits, and raptures unconfined.
No Mermaid warbles (to allay the wind
That drives some vessel tow'rds a dangerous beach)
More thrilling melodies! no caverned Witch
Chaunting a love-spell, ever intertwined
Notes shrill and wild with art more musical!
Alas! that from the lips of abject Want
And Idleness in tatters mendicant
They should proceed — enjoyment to enthral,
And with regret and useless pity haunt
This bold, this pure, this sky-born Waterfall!

SONNET.

THE FALL OF THE AAR — HANDEC.

From the fierce aspect of this River throwing
His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:
But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,
Flowers we espy beside the torrent growing;
Flowers that peep forth from many a cleft and chink,
And, from the whirlwind of his anger, drink

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Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:
They suck, from breath that threatening to destroy
Is more benignant than the dewy eve,
Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:
Nor doubt but He to whom yon Pine-trees nod
Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's God,
These humbler adorations will receive.

SCENE

ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ.

"What know we of the Blest above
But that they sing and that they love?"
Yet, if they ever did inspire
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,
Now, where those harvest Damsels float
Homeward in their rugged Boat,
(While all the ruffling winds are fled,
Each slumbering on some mountain's head,)
Now, surely, hath that gracious aid
Been felt, that influence is displayed.
Pupils of heaven, in order stand
The rustic Maidens, every hand
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid,—
To chaunt, as glides the boat along,
A simple, but a touching Song;
To chaunt, as Angels do above,
The melodies of Peace in Love!

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ENGELBERG.[7]

For gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes
The work of Fancy from her willing hands;
And even such beautiful creation makes
As renders needless spells and magic wands,
And for the boldest tale belief commands.
When first my eyes beheld that famous Hill
The sacred Engelberg, celestial Bands,
With intermingling motions soft and still,
Hung round its top, on wings that changed their hues
at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants; they were
The very Angels whose authentic lays,
Sung from that heavenly ground in middle air,
Made known the spot where Piety should raise
A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.
Resplendent Apparition! if in vain
My ears did listen, 'twas enough to gaze;
And watch the slow departure of the train,
Whose skirts the glowing Mountain thirsted to detain!

OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

Meek Virgin Mother, more benign
Than fairest Star upon the height
Of thy own* mountain set to keep

* Mount Righi.

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Lone vigils thro' the hours of sleep,
What eye can look upon thy shrine
Untroubled at the sight?

These crowded Offerings as they hang
In sign of misery relieved,
Even these, without intent of theirs,
Report of comfortless despairs,
Of many a deep and cureless pang
And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this aerial cleft,
As to a common centre, tend
All sufferings that no longer rest
On mortal succour, all distrest
That pine of human hope bereft,
Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild!
Tho' plenteous flowers around thee blow,
Not only from the dreary strife
Of Winter, but the storms of life,
Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled
"Our Lady of the Snow."

Even for the Man who stops not here,
But down the irriguous valley hies,
Thy very name, O Lady! flings,
O'er blooming fields and gushing springs,
A holy Shadow soft and dear
Of chastening sympathies!

Nor falls that intermingling shade
To Summer gladsomeness unkind;

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It chastens only to requite
With gleams of fresher, purer, light;
While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,
More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on! — a tempting downward way,
A verdant path before us lies;
Clear shines the glorious sun above;
Then give free course to joy and love,
Deeming the evil of the day
Sufficient for the wise.

SONNET.

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ.

By antique Fancy trimmed — tho' lowly, bred
To dignity — in thee O Schwytz! are seen
The genuine features of the golden mean;
Equality by Prudence governed,
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead;
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace, serene
As that of the sweet fields and meadows green
In unambitious compass round thee spread!
Majestic Berne, high on her guardian steep,
Holding a central station of command,
Might well be styled this noble Body's Head;
Thou, lodg'd 'mid mountainous entrenchments deep,
Its Heart[8]; and ever may the heroic Land
Thy name, O Schwytz, in happy freedom keep!

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SONNET.

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES VACHES" ON THE TOP OF THE PASS OF ST. GOTHARD.

I LISTEN — but no faculty of mine
Avails those modulations to detect,
Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss affect
With tenderest passion; leaving him to pine
(So fame reports) and die; his sweet breath'd kine
Remembering, and green Alpine pastures deck'd
With vernal flowers. Yet may we not reject
The tale as fabulous. — Here while I recline
Mindful how others love this simple Strain,
Even here, upon this glorious Mountain (named
Of God himself from dread pre-eminence)
Aspiring thoughts by memory are reclaimed;
And, thro' the Music's touching influence,
The joys of distant home my heart enchain.

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR [9], SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO.

THOU sacred Pile! whose turrets rise,
From yon steep Mountain's loftiest stage,
Guarded by lone San Salvador;
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,
But ne'er to human rage!

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On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned
To rest the universal Lord :
Why leap the fountains from their cells
Where everlasting Bounty dwells ?
— That, while the creature is sustained,
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times,
Let all remind the soul of heaven ;
Our slack devotion needs them all ;
And Faith, so oft of sense the thrall,
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs,
May hope to be forgiven.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
Upon some knee-worn Cell to gaze ;
Hail to the firm unmoving Cross,
Aloft, where pines their branches toss !
And to the Chapel far withdrawn,
That lurks by lonely ways !

Short-sighted Children of the dust
We live and move in sorrow's power ;
Extinguish that unblest disdain
That scorns the altar, mocks the fane,
Where patient Sufferers bend — in trust
To win a happier hour.

Glory, and patriotic Love,
And all the Pomps of this frail "spot
Which men call Earth," have yearned to seek,
Associate with the simply meek,

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Religion in the sainted grove,
And in the hallowed grot.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,
Did mighty Tell repair of old —
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,
Deliverer of the steadfast rocks
And of the ancient hills !

* *He*, too, of battle-martyrs chief !
Who, to recal his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space,
By gathering with a wide embrace,
Into his single heart, a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears.

Ye Alps, in many a rugged link
Far-stretched, and Thou, majestic Po,
Dimly from yon tall Mount descried,
Where'er I wander be my Guide,
Sweet Charity ! — that bids us think,
And feel, if we would know !

* Arnold Winkelreid, at the battle of Sempach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner. The event is one of the most famous in the annals of Swiss heroism ; and pictures and prints of it are frequent throughout the country.

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FORT FUENTES — AT THE HEAD OF THE LAKE OF COMO.

Dread hour! when upheaved by war's sulphurous blast,
This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian stone
So far from the holy enclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles alone;

To rest where the lizard may bask in the palm
Of his half-open hand pure from blemish or speck;
And the green, gilded snake, without troubling the calm
Of the beautiful countenance, twine round his neck.

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)
When winter the grove of its mantle bereaves,
Some Bird (like our own honoured Redbreast) may strew
The desolate Slumberer with moss and with leaves.

Fuentes once harboured the Good and the Brave,
Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure unknown;
Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave
While the thrill of her fifes thro' the mountains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless Ascent —
O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway
When the whirlwind of human destruction is spent,
Our tumults appeased, and our strifes passed away!

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THE ITALIAN ITINERANT, AND THE SWISS GOATHERD.

PART I.

1.

Now that the farewell tear is dried,
Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide!
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
The wages of thy travel, joy!
Whether for London bound — to trill
Thy mountain notes with simple skill;
Or on thy head to poise a show
Of plaster-craft in seemly row;
The graceful form of milk-white steed,
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede;
Or thro' our hamlets thou wilt bear
The sightless Milton, with his hair
Around his placid temples curled;
And Shakespear at his side — a freight,
If clay could think and mind were weight,
For him who bore the world!
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;
The wages of thy travel, joy!

2.

But thou, perhaps, (alert and free
Tho' serving sage philosophy)
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale
Whose sentient tube instructs to time

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A purpose to a fickle clime :
Whether thou chuse this useful part,
Or minister to finer art,
Tho' robbed of many a cherish'd dream,
And crossed by many a shatter'd scheme,
What stirring wonders wilt thou see
In the proud Isle of liberty!
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine
With thoughts which no delights can chase,
Recal a Sister's last embrace,
His Mother's neck entwine ;
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy
That *would* have lov'd the bright-hair'd Boy !

3.

My Song, encouraged by the grace
That beams from his ingenuous face,
For this Adventurer scruples not
To prophesy a golden lot ;
Due recompence, and safe return
To Como's steeps — his happy bourne!
Where he, aloft in Garden glade,
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,
The towering maize, and prop the twig
That ill supports the luscious fig ;
Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof
With purple of the trellis-roof,
That thro' the jealous leaves escapes
From Cadenabbia's pendant grapes.
— Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child

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To share his wanderings ! *he* whose look
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,
So touchingly he smiled,
As with a rapture caught from heaven,
When Pity's unasked alms were given.

PART II.

1.

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest
Like Foresters in leaf-green vest,
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground
For Tell's dread archery renowned,
Before the Target stood — to claim
The guerdon of the steadiest aim.
Loud was the rifle-gun's report,
A startling thunder quick and short!
Bnt, flying thro' the heights around,
Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound
Of hearts and hands alike "prepared
The treasures they enjoy to guard!"
And, if there be a favoured hour
When Heroes are allowed to quit
The Tomb, and on the clouds to sit
With tutelary power,
On their Descendants shedding grace,
This was the hour, and that the place.

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2.

But Truth inspired the Bards of old
When of an iron age they told,
Which to unequal laws gave birth,
That drove Astræa from the earth.
— A gentle Boy — (perchance with blood
As noble as the best endued,
But seemingly a Thing despised;
Even by the sun and air unprized;
For not a tinge or flowery streak
Appeared upon his tender cheek,)
Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes
Of pleasure, by his silent Goats —
Sate far apart in forest shed,
Pale, ragged, bare his feet and head,
Mute as the snow upon the hill,
And, as the Saint he prays to, still.
Ah, what avails heroic deed?
What liberty? if no defence
Be won for feeble Innocence —
Father of All! if wilful Man must read
His punishment in soul-distress,
Grant to the morn of life its natural blessedness!

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SONNET.

THE LAST SUPPER, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA DELLA GRAZIA — MILAN.

Tho' searching damps and many an envious flaw
Have marr'd this Work, the calm etherial grace,
The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,
The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe
The Elements; as they do melt and thaw
The heart of the Beholder — and erase
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace
Of disobedience to the primal law.
The annunciation of the dreadful truth
Made to the Twelve, survives; the brow, the cheek,
And hand reposing on the board in ruth
Of what it utters,* while the unguilty seek
Unquestionable meanings, still bespeak
A labour worthy of eternal youth!

THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1821.

High on her speculative Tower
Stood Science waiting for the Hour
When Sol was destined to endure
That darkening of his radiant face

* "The hand
Sang with the voice, and this the argument." MILTON.

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Which Superstition strove to chase,
Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,
Thro' regions fair as Paradise
We gaily passed, — till Nature wrought
A silent and unlooked-for change,
That checked the desultory range
Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar
The waves danced round us as before,
As lightly, tho' of altered hue;
'Mid recent coolness, such as falls
At noon-tide from umbrageous walls
That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud
Cast far or near a murky shroud;
The sky an azure field displayed;
'Twas sun-light sheathed and gently charmed,
Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
And as in slumber laid: —

Or something night and day between,
Like moon-shine — but the hue was green;
Still moon-shine, without shadow, spread
On jutting rock, and curved shore,
Where gazed the Peasant from his door,
And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps — it lay
Upon Lugano's ample bay;

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The solemnizing veil was drawn
O'er Villas, Terraces, and Towers,
To Albogasio's olive bowers,
Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy, with the speed of fire,
Hath fled to Milan's loftiest spire,
And there alights 'mid that aerial host
Of figures human and divine,[10]
White as the snows of Apennine
Indùrated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array
That guards the Temple night and day;
Angels she sees that might from heaven have flown;
And Virgin Saints — who not in vain
Have striven by purity to gain
The beatific crown;

Far-stretching files, concentric rings
Each narrowing above each; — the wings —
The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips,
The starry zone of sovereign height,
All steeped in this portentous light!
All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen, (if aught
These perishable spheres have wrought
May with that issue be compared)
Throngs of celestial visages,
Darkening like water in the breeze,
A holy sadness shared.

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See! while I speak, the labouring Sun
His glad deliverance has begun:
The cypress waves its sombre plume
More cheerily; and Town and Tower,
The Vineyard and the Olive bower,
Their lustre re-assume!

Oh ye, who guard and grace my Home
While in far-distant Lands we roam,
Enquiring thoughts are turned to you;
Does a clear ether meet your eyes?
Or have black vapours hid the skies
And mountains from your view?

I ask in vain — and know far less
If sickness, sorrow, or distress
Have spared my Dwelling to this hour:
Sad blindness! but ordained to prove
Our Faith in Heaven's unfailing love
And all-controlling Power.

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS.

1.

How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free
From Love's uneasy sovereignty,
Beats with a fancy running high
Her simple cares to magnify;

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Whom Labour, never urged to toil,
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;
Whose heaviest sin it is to look
Askance upon her pretty Self
Reflected in some crystal brook;
Whom grief hath spared — who sheds no tear
But in sweet pity; and can hear
Another's praise from envy clear.

2.

Such, (but O lavish Nature! why
That dark unfathomable eye,
Where lurks a Spirit that replies
To stillest mood of softest skies,
Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,
Another's — first, and then her own?)
Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid,
Our Lady's laggard Votaress,
Halting beneath the chesnut shade
To accomplish there her loveliness:
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;
A Sister serves with slacker hand;
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the festal band.

3.

How blest (if truth may entertain
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)

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The HELVETIAN Girl — who daily braves,
In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
And quits the bosom of the deep
Only to climb the rugged steep!
— Say whence that modulated shout?
From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?
Or does the greeting to a rout
Of giddy Bacchanals belong?
Jubilant outcry! — rock and glade
Resounded — but the voice obeyed
The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

4.

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;
Her courage animates the flood;
Her step the elastic green-sward meets
Returning unreluctant sweets;
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
Aloud, saluted by her voice!
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
Be as thou art — for through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race!
And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;
The fetters which the Matron wears;
The Patriot Mother's weight of anxious cares!

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5.

* "Sweet Highland Girl! a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"
When Thou didst pass before my eyes,
Gay Vision under sullen skies,
While Hope and Love around thee played
Near the rough Falls of Inversneyd!
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,
Nor take one ray of light from Thee;
For in my Fancy thou dost share
The gift of Immortality;
And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,
The Votaress by Lugano's side;
And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep, descried!

SONNET.

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONAPARTE FOR A TRIUMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN, NOW LYING BY THE WAY-SIDE ON THE SEMPLON PASS.

Ambition, following down this far-famed slope
Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,
While clarions prate of Kingdoms to be won,
Perchance, in future ages, here may stop;
Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope
By admonition from this prostrate Stone;
Memento uninscribed of Pride o'erthrown,

* See Vol. II. p. 39.

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Vanity's hieroglyphic ; — a choice trope
In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the Rock,
Rest where thy course was stayed by Power Divine!
The Soul transported sees, from hint of thine,
Crimes which the great Avenger's hand provoke,
Hears combats whistling o'er the ensanguin'd heath :
What groans ! what shrieks ! what quietness in death !

STANZAS,

COMPOSED IN THE SEMPLON PASS.

Vallombrosa ! I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber reclined on the moss-covered floor,
To listen to Anio's precipitous flood,
When the stillness of evening hath softened its roar ;
To range thro' the Temples of Pæstum, to muse
In Pompeii, preserved by her burial in earth ;
On pictures to gaze, where they drank in their hues ;
And murmur sweet Songs on the ground of their birth !

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of Rome,
Could I leave them unseen and not yield to regret ?
With a hope (and no more) for a season to come,
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent debt?
Thou fortunate Region ! whose Greatness inurned,
Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust ;
Twice-glorified fields ! if in sadness I turned
From your infinite marvels, the sadness was just.

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Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois retires
From dew-sprinkled grass to heights guarded with snow,
Tow'rd the mists that hang over the land of my Sires,
From the climate of myrtles contented I go.
My thoughts become bright, like yon edging of Pine,
Black fringe to a precipice lofty and bare,
Which, as from behind the Sun strikes it, doth shine
With threads that seem part of his own silver hair.

Tho' the burthen of toil with dear friends we divide,
Tho' by the same zephyr our temples are fann'd,
As we rest in the cool orange-bower side by side,
A yearning survives which few hearts shall withstand:
Each step hath its value while homeward we move;—
O joy when the girdle of England appears!
What moment in life is so conscious of love,
So rich in the tenderest sweetness of tears?

SONNET.

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI.

What Beast of Chase hath broken from the cover?
Stern Gemmi listens to as full a cry,
As multitudinous a harmony,
As e'er did ring the heights of Latmos over,
When, from the soft couch of her sleeping Lover,
Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the mountain-dew
In keen pursuit — and gave, where'er she flew,
Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.

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A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on
Thro' the bleak concave, wakes this wonderous chime
Of aëry voices locked in unison, —
Faint — far off — near — deep — solemn and sublime!
So, from the body of a single deed,
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting thoughts, proceed!

PROCESSIONS.

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY.

To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield;
Or to solicit knowledge of events,
Which in her breast futurity concealed;
And that the past might have its true intents
Feelingly told by living monuments;
Mankind of yore were prompted to devise
Rites such as yet Persepolis presents
Graven on her cankered walls, — solemnities
That moved in long array before admiring eyes.

The Hebrews, thus, carrying in joyful state
Thick boughs of palm, and willows from the brook,
Marched round the Altar — to commemorate
How, when their course they thro' the desart took,
Guided by signs which ne'er the sky forsook,
They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low;
Green boughs were borne, while for the blast that shook

Down tó the earth the walls of Jericho,
They uttered loud hosannas, — let the trumpets blow!

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred Grove
Fed in the Lybian Waste by gushing wells,
The Priests and Damsels of Ammonian Jove
Provoked responses with shrill canticles;
While, in a Ship begirt with silver bells,
They round his Altar bore the horned God,
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells
Aloft, yet in a tilting Vessel rode,
When universal sea the mountains overflowed.

Why speak of Roman Pomps? the haughty claims
Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars;
The feast of Neptune — and the Cerèal Games,
With Images, and Crowns, and empty Cars;
The dancing Salii — on the shields of Mars
Striking with fury; and the deeper dread
Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars
Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head
Of Cybele was seen, sublimely turretted!

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft
Appeared, to govern Christian pageantries:
The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft
Moved to the chaunt of sober litanies.
Even such, this day, came wafted on the breeze
From a long train — in hooded vestments fair
Enwrapt — and winding, between Alpine trees
Spiry and dark, around their House of Prayer
Below the icy bed of bright Argentiere.

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But O the fairest pageant of a dream
Did never equal that which met our eyes!
The glacier Pillars with the living Stream
Of white-robed Shapes[11], seemed linked in solemn guise,
For the same service, by mysterious ties;
Numbers exceeding credible account
Of number, stood like spotless Votaries
Prepared to issue from a wintry fount;
The impenetrable heart of that exalted Mount!

They, too, who sent so far a holy gleam
While they the Church engirt with motion slow,
A product of that awful Mount did seem,
Poured from his vaults of everlasting snow;
Not virgin-lilies marshalled in bright row,
Not swans descending with the stealthy tide,
A livelier sisterly resemblance show
Than the fair Forms, that on the turf did glide,
To that unmoving band — the Shapes aloft descried!

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs
Of that licentious craving in the mind
To act the God among external things,
To bind, on apt suggestion, and unbind;
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned:
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou miss,
Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's dark abyss!

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ELEGIAC STANZAS.

On arriving at Lausanne, we heard of the fate of the Young American whose death is here lamented. He had been our companion for three days; and we separated upon Mount Righi with mutual hope of meeting again in the course of our Tour. GOLDAU, mentioned towards the conclusion of this Piece, is a Village at the foot of Mount Righi, one of those overwhelmed by a mass which fell from the side of the mountain ROSSBERG, a few years ago.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,
From the dread summit of the Queen
Of Mountains, through a deep ravine,
Where, in her holy Chapel, dwells
"Our Lady of the Snow."

The sky was blue, the air was mild;
Free were the streams and green the bowers;
As if, to rough assaults unknown,
The genial spot had *ever* shown
A countenance that sweetly smiled,
The face of summer-hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease,
With pleasure dancing through the frame;
All that we knew of lively care,
Our path that straggled here and there,
Of trouble — but the fluttering breeze,
Of Winter — but a name.

— If foresight could have rent the veil
Of three short days — but hush — no more!
Calm is the grave, and calmer none

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Than that to which thy cares are gone,
Thou Victim of the stormy gale,
Asleep on ZURICH's shore!

Oh GODDART! what art thou?—a name—
A sunbeam followed by a shade!
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,
The great, the experienced, and the wise;
Too much from this frail earth we claim,
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,
Where, from a deep Lake's mighty urn,
Forth slips, like an enfranchised Slave,
A sea-green River, proud to lave,
With current swift and undefiled,
The towers of old LUCERN.

We parted upon solemn ground
Far-lifted tow'rds the unfading sky;
But all our thoughts were *then* of Earth
That gives to common pleasures birth;
And nothing in our hearts we found
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathizing Powers of air,
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,
Herbs moistened by Virginian dew,
A most untimely sod to strew,
That lacks the ornamental care
Of kindred human hands!

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Beloved by every gentle Muse
He left his Trans-atlantic home:
Europe, a realized romance,
Had opened on his eager glance;
What present bliss! — what golden views!
What stores for years to come!

Though lodged within no vigorous frame,
His soul her daily tasks renewed,
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings
High poised — or as the wren that sings
In shady places, to proclaim
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain is sadly-uttered praise;
The words of truth's memorial vow
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed
From flowers 'mid GOLDAU's ruins bred;
Sweet as Eve's fondly-lingering rays,
On RIGHI's silent brow.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;
This tribute from a casual Friend
A not unwelcome aid may lend,
To feed the tender luxury,
The rising pang to smother.

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SONNET.

SKY-PROSPECT—FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE.

Lo! in the burning West, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!
Yon rampant Cloud mimics a Lion's shape;
There — combats a huge Crocodile — agape
A golden spear to swallow! and that brown
And massy Grove, so near yon blazing Town,
Stirs — and recedes — destruction to escape!
Yet all is harmless as the Elysian shades
Where Spirits dwell in undisturb'd repose,
Silently disappears, or quickly fades; —
Meek Nature's evening comment on the shows
That for oblivion take their daily birth,
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

SONNET.

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE[12].

Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son
Of England — who in hope her coast had won,
His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?
Well — let him pace this noted beach once more,
That gave the Roman his triumphal shells;
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells

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Haughtily shake — a dreaming Conqueror!
Enough; my Country's Cliffs I can behold,
And proudly think, beside the murmuring sea,
Of checked Ambition — Tyranny controuled,
And Folly cursed with endless memory:
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

SONNET.

AFTER LANDING — THE VALLEY OF DOVER.

Nov. 1820.

WHERE be the noisy followers of the game
Which Faction breeds? the turmoil where? that past
Thor' Europe, echoing from the Newsman's blast,
And filled our hearts with grief for England's shame.
Peace greets us; — rambling on without an aim
We mark majestic herds of Cattle free
To ruminate[13] — couched on the grassy lea,
And hear far-off the mellow horn proclaim
The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder sound
Stirs not; enwrapt I gaze — with strange delight,
While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,
Here only serve a feeling to invite
That lifts the Spirit to a calmer height,
And makes the rural stillness more profound.

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TO ENTERPRIZE.

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" The Italian Itinerant," &c. (see page 342) led to the train of thought which produced the annexed piece.

Digitized by Google

TO ENTERPRIZE.

KEEP for the Young the impassioned smile
Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee stand
High on a chalky cliff of Britain's Isle,
A slender Volume grasping in thy hand —
(Perchance the pages that relate
The various turns of Crusoe's fate)
Ah, spare the exulting smile,
And drop thy pointing finger bright
As the first flash of beacon-light;
But neither veil thy head in shadows dim,
Nor turn thy face away
From One who, in the evening of his day,
To thee would offer no presumptuous hymn!

I.

Bold Spirit! who art free to rove
Among the starry courts of Jove,
And oft in splendour dost appear
Embodied to poetic eyes,
While traversing this nether sphere,
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRIZE.
Daughter of Hope! her favourite Child,
Whom she to young Ambition bore,
When Hunter's arrow first defiled
The Grove, and stained the turf with gore:

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Thee winged Fancy took, and nursed
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,
Or where the mightier Waters burst
From Caves of Indian mountains hoar!
She wrapp'd thee in a Panther's skin;
And thou (if rightly I rehearse
What wondering Shepherds told in verse)
From rocky fortress in mid air
(The food which pleased thee best to win)
Didst oft the flame-eyed Eagle scare
With infant shout,—as often sweep,
Paired with the Ostrich, o'er the plain;
And, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep
Upon the couchant Lion's mane!
With rolling years thy strength increased;
And, far beyond thy native East,
To thee, by varying titles known,
As variously thy power was shown,
Did incense-bearing Altars rise,
Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,
From Suppliants panting for the skies!

II.

What though this ancient Earth be trod
No more by step of Demi-god,
Mounting from glorious deed to deed
As thou from clime to clime didst lead,
Yet still, the bosom beating high,
And the hushed farewell of an eye
Where no procrastinating gaze
A last infirmity betrays,

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Prove that thy heaven-descended sway
Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.
By thy divinity impelled,
The Stripling seeks the tented field;
The aspiring Virgin kneels; and, pale
With awe, receives the hallowed veil,
A soft and tender Heroine
Vowed to severer discipline;
Enflamed by thee, the blooming Boy
Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy,
And of the Ocean's dismal breast
A play-ground and a couch of rest;
Thou to his dangers dost enchain,
'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,
The Chamois-chaser — awed in vain
By chasm or dizzy precipice;
And hast Thou not with triumph seen
How soaring Mortals glide serene
From cloud to cloud, and brave the light
With bolder than Icarian flight?
Or, in their bells of crystal, dive
Where winds and waters cease to strive,
For no unholy visitings,
Among the monsters of the Deep,
And all the sad and precious things
Which there in ghastly silence sleep!
— Within our fearless reach are placed
The secrets of the burning Waste, —
Egyptian Tombs unlock their Dead,
Nile trembles at his fountain head;

Thou speak'st — and lo! the polar Seas
Unbosom their last mysteries.
— But oh! what transports, what sublime reward,
Won from the world of mind, dost thou prepare
For philosophic Sage — or high-souled Bard
Who, for thy service trained in lonely woods,
Hath fed on pageants floating thro' the air,
Or calentured in depth of limpid floods;
Nor grieves — tho' doomed, thro' silent night, to bear
The domination of his glorious themes,
Or struggle in the net-work of thy dreams!

III.

Dread Minister of wrath!
Who to their destined punishment dost urge
The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of hardened heart!
Not unassisted by the flattering stars,
Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path
When they in pomp depart,
With trampling horses and refulgent cars —
Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge;
Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown strands;
Or stifled under weight of desart sands —
An Army now, and now a living hill[14]
Heaving with convulsive throes, —
It quivers — and is still;
Or to forget their madness and their woes,
Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless snows!

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IV.

Back flows the willing current of my Song:
If to provoke such doom the Impious dare,
Why should it daunt a blameless prayer?
— Bold Goddess! range our Youth among;
Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat
In hearts no longer young;
Still may a veteran few have pride
In thoughts whose sternness makes them sweet;
In fixed resolves by reason justified;
That to their object cleave like sleet
Whitening a pine-tree's northern side,
While fields are naked far and wide.

V.

But, if such homage thou disdain
As doth with mellowing years agree,
One rarely absent from thy Train
More humble favours may obtain
For thy contented Votary.
She, who incites the frolic lambs
In presence of their heedless dams,
And to the solitary fawn
Vouchsafes her lessons — bounteous Nymph
That wakes the breeze — the sparkling lymph
Doth hurry to the lawn;
She, who inspires that strain of joyance holy
Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the melancholy,

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Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead for me;
And vernal mornings opening bright
With views of undefined delight,
And cheerful songs, and suns that shine
On busy days, with thankful nights, be mine.

VI.

But thou, O Goddess! in thy favourite Isle
(Freedom's impregnable redoubt,
The wide Earth's store-house fenced about
With breakers roaring to the gales
That stretch a thousand thousand sails)
Quicken the Slothful, and exalt the Vile!
Thy impulse is the life of Fame;
Glad Hope would almost cease to be
If torn from thy society;
And Love, when worthiest of the name,
Is proud to walk the Earth with thee!

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NOTES.

Note 1. Page 323.

Bruges.

This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful City. Mr. Southey, in the "Poet's Pilgrimage," speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

"Time hath not wronged her, nor hath Ruin sought
Rudely her splendid Structures to destroy,
Save in those recent days, with evil fraught,
When Mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

"But for the scars in that unhappy rage
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;
Like our first Sires, a beautiful old age
Is hers in venerable years arrayed:
And yet, to her, benignant stars may bring,
What fate denies to man, — a second spring.

"When I may read of tilts in days of old,
And tourneys graced by Chieftains of renown,
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,
If fancy would pourtray some stately town,

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Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,
Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee."

NOTE 2. Page 330.

Miserere Domine.

See the beautiful Song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy "THE REMORSE." Why is the Harp of Quantock silent?

NOTE 3. Page 330.

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day: "When the Austrians took Hockheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted — not a gun was fired — not a voice heard: but they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last 15 years at once called up. Prince Schwartzenberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop, they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water."

NOTE 4. Page 331.

Not (like his great Compeers) indignantly
Doth Danube spring to light!

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present the contrast is most

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striking. The Spring appears in a capacious Stone Basin upon the front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,— and, entering the Garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a Stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of the Spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube.

Note 5. Page 332.

We reached a votive Stone that bears
The name of Aloys Reding.

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which with a courage and perseverance worthy of the cause, opposed the flagitious, and too successful, attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate their country.

Note 6. Page 333.

On approaching the Staub-bach.

"The Staub-bach" is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to a sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and

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savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall — and reminded me of religious services chaunted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times.

NOTE 7. Page 335.

Engelberg.

"Engelberg," the Hill of Angels, as the name implies. The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The Architecture of the Building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the Mountaineers has conferred upon it.

NOTE 8. Page 337.

Thou, lodg'd 'mid mountainous entrenchments deep,
Its HEART —

"Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the French Invasion,) had elapsed, when, for the first time, foreign Soldiers were seen upon the frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the laws of their Governors."

NOTE 9. Page 338.

The Church of San Salvador.

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the Altar and the Image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the

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summit of which the Church is built, stands in the midst of the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2000 feet, and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the Traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. — Splendid fertility, rich woods, and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps — unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

NOTE 10. Page 348.

Of figures human and divine.

The Statues ranged round the Spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan, have been found fault with by Persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the Spire, must strike an unprejudiced Person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the Country in the imaginations and feelings of the

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Spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several Children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these, or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach. — Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the Plain of Lombardy between!

NOTE 11. Page 357.

The Glacier Pillars with the living Stream
Of white-robed Shapes —

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the Valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin — but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1000 Persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered Valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving* Figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

NOTE 12. Page 361.

The Harbour of Boulogne.

Near the Town of Boulogne, and overhanging the Beach, are the remains of a Tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western

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Expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And, at no great distance from these Ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and, pointing towards the white cliffs upon which their standards *were to float.* He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that Ground, in memory of the Foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column, — which was not completed at the time we were there.

NOTE 13. Page 362.

We mark majestic herds of Cattle free
To ruminate —

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Every where one misses, in the cultivated scenery abroad, the animating and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

NOTE 14. Page 368.

A living hill, &c.

"While the living hill
Heaved with convulsive throes and all was still." —

Dr. Dorwin, describing the destruction of the army of Cambyses.

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DESULTORY STANZAS

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS* FROM THE PRESS.

I.

Is then the final page before me spread,
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be read —
How can I give thee licence to depart?
One tribute more; — unbidden feelings start
Forth from their coverts — slighted objects rise —
My Spirit is the scene of such wild art
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

II.

All that I saw returns upon my view,
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,
All that I felt this moment doth renew;
And where the foot with no unmanly fear
Recoil'd — and wings alone could travel — there
I move at ease, and meet contending themes
That press upon me, crossing the career
Of recollections vivid as the dreams
Of midnight, — cities — plains — forests — and mighty streams!

* [Of the Memorials of a Tour on the Continent.]

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III.

Where mortal never breathed I dare to sit
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power! — and yet
What are they but a wreck and residue,
Whose only business is to perish? — true
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons of Time
Labour their proper greatness to subdue;
Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude sublime.

IV.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge
Across thy long deep Valley, furious Rhone!
Arch that *here* rests upon the granite ridge
Of Monte Rosa — *there*, on frailer stone
Of secondary birth — the Jung-frau's cone;
And, from that arch down-looking on the Vale,
The aspect I behold of every zone;
A sea of foliage tossing with the gale,
Blithe Autumn's purple crown, and Winter's icy mail!

V.

Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks,*
Down the main avenue my sight can range:
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks
Within them, church, and town, and hut, and grange,
For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;

* Les Fourches, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that enclose the Valais, which terminates at St. Maurice.

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Snows — torrents ; — to the region's utmost bound,
Life, Death, in amicable interchange —
But list ! the avalanche — heart-striking sound !
Tumult by prompt repose and awful silence crown'd !

VI.

Is not the Chamois suited to his place ?
The Eagle worthy of her ancestry ?
— Let Empires fall ; but ne'er shall Ye disgrace
Your noble birthright, Ye that occupy
Your Council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount[1], there judge of fit and right,
In simple democratic majesty ;
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows — the might
And purity of nature spread before your sight !

VII.

From this appropriate Court, renown'd LUCERNE
Leads me to pace her honoured Bridge[2] — that cheers
The Patriot's heart with Pictures rude and stern,
An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.
Like portraiture, from loftier source, endears
That work of kindred frame, which spans the Lake
Just at the point of issue, where it fears
The form and motion of a Stream to take ;
Where it begins to stir, *Yet* voiceless as a Snake.

VIII.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral roll'd,
This long-roofed Vista penetrate — but see,

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One after one, its Tablets that unfold
The whole design of Scripture history;
From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern skies,
Announcing ONE was born Mankind to free;
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice;
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.

IX.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.
— Long may these homely Works devised of old,
These simple Efforts of Helvetian skill,
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold
The State, — the Country's destiny to mould;
Turning, for them who pass, the common dust
Of servile opportunity to gold;
Filling the soul with sentiments august —
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just!

X.

And those surrounding Mountains — but no more;
Time creepeth softly as the liquid flood;
Life slips from underneath us, like the floor
Of that wide rainbow-arch whereon we stood,
Earth stretched below, Heaven in our neighbourhood.
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;
Go forth, and please the gentle and the good;
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace some future Lay.

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Tours on the Continent

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 380.

On Sarnen's Mount.

Sarnen, one of the two Capitals of the Canton of Underwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the Tyrant of that name, whose chateau formerly stood there. On the 1st of Jan. 1808, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their Country, all the Castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their Creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their Strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The scite, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.

Note 2. Page 380.

Honoured Bridge.

The Bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the Passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent Country. The Pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History on the Cathedral-bridge, amount according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the Passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he

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returns. The pictures on these Bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.

The following Stanzas were suggested by the "Tower of Tell," at Altorf, on the outside of which the chief exploits of the Hero are painted: it is said to stand upon the very ground where grew the Lime Tree against which his Son was placed when the Father's archery was put to proof under the circumstances so famous in Swiss History.

What though the Italian pencil wrought not here,
Nor such as did the public meed bestow
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,
While narrow cares their limits overflow.
Thrice happy, Burghers, Peasants, Warriors old,
Infants in arms, and Ye, that as ye go
Home-ward or School-ward, ape what ye behold;
Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy bold!

But when that calm Spectatress from on high
Looks down — the bright and solitary Moon,
Who never gazes but to beautify;
And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of noon
Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune
That fosters peace, and gentleness recals;
Then might the passing Monk receive a boon
Of saintly pleasure, from these pictured walls,
While, on the warlike groups, the mellowing lustre falls.

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How blest the souls who when their trials come
Yield not to terror or despondency,
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal doom,
Whose head the ruddy Apple tops, while he
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree,
Not quaking like the timid forest game;
He smiles — the hesitating shaft to free,
Assured that Heaven its justice will proclaim,
And to his Father gives its own unerring aim.

In the 3d of the Desultory Stanzas, I am indebted to M. Ramond, who has written with genuine feeling on these subjects.

POEM ON ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

Page 98.

And wondrous length and strength of arm.

The people of the neighbourhood of Loch Ketterine, in order to prove the extraordinary length of their Hero's arm, tell you that "he could garter his Tartan Stockings below the knee when standing upright." According to their account he was a tremendous swordsman. After having sought all occasions of proving his prowess, he was never conquered but once, and this not till he was an Old Man.

INSCRIPTION IV. Page 172, line 10.

"Strait all that holy was unhallowed lies."

DANIEL.

END OF VOL. III.

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These lines moved the horror of
Winchester's accusations. [the
Error. See below. ×
Struck them out & substituted]

"Blood, alone, vengeance doth,
If on thy love our land has hope
to make rest,
And all the nations debtors to
fulfil
Thy laws, I vow henceforth our
peace, our pious good will.

× He rearranged the lines, thus:
"But blame is by most awful vengeance
In nothing as a pious vision"
Keeping the last two lines

The lines given above were placed
at the end of the next Stanza,
displacing twenty-two lines.

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DOES NO
CIRCULAT



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